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HAPPY BIRTHDAY. YOUR UNPARALLELED ARTISTRY, INTEGRITY
AND GENIUS, LIKE THAT OF BRAHMS AND VERMEER, MAKE THIS
A BETTER WORLD.

ROBERT POWELL, 321 WEST 103RD STREET, NEW YORK.

Telegram sent, April 4, 1972, 6:15 P.M.

BLOOMS DAY

the Immortal Meeting-day

1904

Leopold Bloom
Stephen Dedalus

1974

S. Robert Powell
Gail Trebbe



June 16, 1975

Sonnet Autobiographique

De préférence j'habite une île. Les habitants des îles sont différents de ceux des continents.

Il me faut écouter de la musique symphonique chaque jour.

Désir: voler de mes propres ailes. Dédale et Icare. Je n'ai qu'un rêve qui revient--je vole. C'est beau.

Le métal que j'aime le mieux, c'est l'argent.

Je tiens en haute estime trois saints: Saint Antoine de Padoue, Saint Martin de Tours et Saint Georges.

Désir: diriger les symphonies de Gustav Mahler. Recréer le monde.

Je ne suis jamais envieux, mais je suis presque toujours jaloux.

Je suis plus créateur entre le coucher du soleil et le lever du soleil qu'entre le lever du soleil et le coucher du soleil.

Les étymologies et les fautes de dactylographie me hantent. Fêter les étapes intermédiaires, bannir les étapes intermédiaires.

Désir: être le monarque régnant (ou l'héritier présomptif au trône) d'Angleterre.

Je suis: instruit, civilisé, mince.

Je ne suis jamais solitaire quand je suis seul, mais je suis toujours solitaire quand je suis parmi les autres.

Les oracles me répugnent et me font peur.

Une forme esthétique, c'est le produit le plus pur de l'esprit humain.

S. Robert Powell
May 22, 1975

And all so very easy

Walking waking pertly on the veiled piazza light
knew hope otherwise to re-infuse the sons made of
former days. Noland even I wing on two now belong
above the garden in the pack the area where the
bower of the quail quakes in even staccato blurtings.
Here lives still in the even-natured on the West
Whill attest he be over of my former aspirations
toscin not. Il legs but now such is the state it
meant over and over aging the mecotte cup in the
alten bush ash the more it mettle he sees to rise
up there in space pace it all once over again. Yet
it naturally is if won butter bolt her now it surges
mar too through the reigns of veins not stopping
popping but where how do you do so that when next
it mepple do not so traverse spite fulcan bittle
better the knot. Each peach day hell quando I'll
bet the rest will will of the waves that make it all
so easy each of the seventy plus and maybe more make
the travel back and up and down with eyes that seek
and search and pelt it over the sun. I ask but not
pout loud to me but that's ok pay not the knell.
And all so very easy.

(Thoughts inspired by Finnegans Wake and Ulysses.
Written down on the fifteenth of September, 1974)

Why is this true? How is this possible?

"Coleridge" is free. I gave him liberty. I gave him form. I freed him from the New York Times of Sunday, March 10, 1974. I am a liberator. "Coleridge" soars above the Conservatory, he is here. Yet he is not here. He is with Gaudier-Brzeska's "Bird Swallowing a Fish," with the "Liebestod," with Emma Bovary, with Donald's streams of consciousness, with Petrushka, with Trebbe's poems, with Margot Channing, with the "Pathétique," with the model animals created by Poulenc. But if he is with them, then he must be here, for they are. Why is this true? How is this possible?

My dictionary--the "thin paper" 1959 edition of Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, based on the second edition of Webster's New International Dictionary--contains The Waste Land, The Sea Gull, The Portrait of a Lady. They are there. They are there, but I cannot see them. Eliot, Chekhov, and James knew they were there. That is why they exist. I freed "Coleridge," James freed Isabel Archer. He did so by arranging given words in a particular order. He put the word "Under" before the word "certain" before the word "circumstances" before the word "there" before the word "are" before the word "few" before the word "hours" before the word "in" before the word "life," and so on, and Isabel Archer, in a sublime moment, was born. The arrangement of words arrived at by James in The Portrait of a Lady represents a conceptual form. The words "Donnybrook Fair donor Don Quixote donsie don't donzel doodle," do not represent a conceptual form, at least not at the moment. Someday they may. James freed a conceptual form from a sequence of words. He created a novel.

The word "despair" is found in my dictionary on page 225, in the left hand column, the seventh word down the page. Have I created a conceptual form by describing where that word is found? I have not. I have taken away its liberty. To name is to kill. I have particularized the location of its title, but what is its form?

What of sculpture? What of music? What of painting? "Bird in Space," "Das Lied von der Erde," and "L'Enterrement à Ornans," tell us the names of conceptual forms but that is all. They are useful labels. The definition of the word found in my dictionary on page 225 in the left hand column, the seventh word down the page, is also a useful label. Are all birds in space identical? Are all songs of the earth identical? Are all burials at Ornans identical? Are all despairs identical? How is this possible? Why is this true?

Why is the Rouen cathedral worth defending? Is it because of the limestone? the ancient limestone? It is not. It is because that limestone was given a particular conceptual form, a form which represents something, just as "Mild und leise wie er lächelt, wie das Auge hold er öffnet--seh ihr's, Freunde?" represents something. Those somethings must be defended. Gaudier-Brzeska died defending a conceptual form. The history of art is nothing if not an index of conceptual forms. One day "Coleridge" was not. The next day he was. "Coleridge's" conceptual form existed before he did. I created him out of papier maché. Respighi made his "Ucelli" out of quavers. In the beginning was the bird, and the bird was made flesh.

Flaubert gave the prosaic reality of nineteenth-century Normandy a form, a form which is so well articulated that it becomes transparent, and Emma's life appears like yours and mine--formless. That is the difference between art and life. The former must have a form. The latter need not, but surely can, as Whistler and Wilde taught us. Words, like art, have a shape. Joyce shaped words in such a way that they assume meanings they do not inherently possess. Their shape is meaningful. They are not. "Pletzz mreelistop hoot," when assigned a particular vocal form, means, for all men, "I love you."

The musical score incarnates ("carnalis") a sequence of notes which, when played, must have a precise shape--the task of the conductor is to find the shape envisioned by the composer. Mahler's Symphony No. 5 has a different shape when conducted by Bruno Walter than when conducted by Leonard Bernstein.

"And the larks trilled unflaggingly, and the quail called to one another, and the cry of the corn crane sounded as though someone were rattling an old iron door handle."

Everyone willingly agrees that a circle and square have a particular shape. "Shut the door," "Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe," "joy," and "slowly" also have a shape. What does "hope" look like? Is it round? Is it flat? Enter the artist. When the word "hope" is assigned a conceptual form, it is comprehensible to all men. The word "hope" is meaningful only to those who know English. Form is universal. Content is not. The word "hope" was created when it was agreed that it has a particular conceptual form. We don't have

to carry a three-dimensional cube in our pocket in order to remember what a cube looks like. In the beginning was the word and the word was made flesh. Not true. In the beginning was the conceptual form and then came the word. Most of us know most of the words in the dictionary, but most of us don't know what they look like. Choreographers create gestural shells. Dancers supply the flesh. Play-writes create gestural shells. Actors supply the flesh.

The dictionary gives the names of the words and attempts to characterize the content. What about the form?

The statement "All plots are dull" is absolutely true and, unfortunately, it is almost universally misunderstood. The number of subjects for art is finite. The number of forms for that finite content is infinite. It's as simple as that. Every age deals with the same content. Every age creates new forms. Form and content are inseparable. Michelangelo's David is different from Bernini's David. Most people are repelled by modern art because most people are frightened by new forms.

We see the world as Chekhov did when we realize that the conceptual form of "Uncle Vanya" is a matter of life and death. When the curtain goes up we are in the Prozorov house. It is the fifth of May. We are there. We are not. "Coleridge" soars above the Conservatory, he is here. Yet he is not. He is with Gaudier-Brezeska's "Bird Swallowing a Fish," with the "Liebestod," with Emma Bovary, with Donald's streams of consciousness, with Petrushka, with Trebbe's poems, with Margot Channing, with the "Pathétique," with the model animals created by Poulenc.

(Thoughts written down after having seen THE SAVAGE MESSIAH and THE MUSIC LOVERS on October 5, 1974)



SOL LUCET OMNIBUS: ONE HUNDRED APHORISMS CULLED BY
THE AUTHOR FROM THIRTY YEARS OF DEVASTATING EXPERIENCE
ON THE PLANET EARTH, AND WRITTEN DOWN DURING THE FIRST
DAYS OF SEPTEMBER IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOUR, TO BE USED IN THE
EDUCATION OF CHILDREN, IN THE TRAINING OF HOUSEHOLD
STAFFS, AND IN THE ACCLIMATIZATION OF THE NON-INDIGENOUS.

S. Robert Powell

FOR:

My Enigmatic Aphrodite, The Countess Castiglione.

Physical strength and physical beauty are rarely found
in conjunction with mental strength and mental beauty.

* * * * *

Those who are prolix in vague analogies are lucid.

* * * * *

Most twentieth-century Italians are philistines. They
would be happier in Spain.

* * * * *

Figurative language is necessary because we no longer
live in trees.

* * * * *

The library in the English house, like Lourdes, Assisi,
and Canterbury, is a "lieu sacré." In both, solemnity
is recommended, ritual encouraged, and silence mandatory.

* * * * *

The middle class is frightened by such terms as
"trompe-l'oeil," "C sharp minor," and "transept."

* * * * *

The vulgar throng has an unnatural passion for newspapers.

* * * * *

Revolutions remind man that evolution, for better or
worse, is an on-going process.

* * * * *

Wheat, history, and art have this in common--they are
precious, and should not be mistaken for chaff, current
events, and life, which are waste products.

* * * * *

Human beings deserve something much better than each other.

* * * * *

There is nothing like a good platitude for placing one's guilt within the context of history.

* * * * *

Gregariousness is a great mistake. One-half of one-half is less than one-fourth.

* * * * *

The interior monologue, like the telephone, should be used with great care.

* * * * *

The well-planned seduction, like the well-made play, requires a catalyst.

* * * * *

Walking is the most neglected of the fine arts.

* * * * *

Both the "nouveau riche" and the "nouveau pauvre" often find it necessary to effect certain deletions in their address books.

* * * * *

Newspapers should not be read in public, and should, under no circumstances, contain illustrations.

* * * * *

Flaubert and Zola re-affirmed the Renaissance belief that one and one are two.

* * * * *

When the caveman first picked up a club he began, in many respects, the industrial revolution.

* * * * *

The French are a nation of "poseurs," primarily because of their fear of appearing English.

* * * * *

No idea can be repeated without taking on the color of the mind that receives it.

* * * * *

Without artifice there is no such thing as nature.

* * * * *

In the country, enthusiasm is usually synonymous with virtue and health. In the city, it is often called decadence.

* * * * *

A peasant is a peasant is a peasant.

* * * * *

Those people who "eat to live," view walking as a means of transportation. Those who "live to eat," view walking as an art.

* * * * *

The middle class would be much happier under absolute monarchy.

* * * * *

Philanthropy, more often than not, is motivated by self-interest.

* * * * *

Huysmans discovered that the "here" and the "there" are indistinguishable.

* * * * *

People who fill their houses with gadgets are either unable or unwilling to engage in conversation.

* * * * *

The middle class considers itself to be wonderfully tolerant. It can tolerate everything, except heterogeneity.

* * * * *

The most incorruptible witness to obliquity is placidity.

* * * * *

If Cleopatra's nose had not been as it was, Western Europe would have found it necessary to re-define beauty.

* * * * *

Provincialism is reprehensible only when found in city dwellers.

* * * * *

Oracular dehiscence, like "sauce béchamel," is occasionally useful but seldom necessary.

* * * * *

If the history of America were to be described solely on the basis of those events that transpired in the American parlor, the colonists would doubtless appear as embarrassed gentleman farmers.

* * * * *

The middle class would be less confused if it belonged to the proletariat.

* * * * *

If a competition were organized in order to select ten new saints, ten new saints would doubtless be chosen. Twenty new sinners would, however, simultaneously come into existence.

* * * * *

The Hindus have their sacred cows. The French have Racine, Sainte-Beuve, and Sartre.

* * * * *

People who write aphorisms on public conveyances are suspect.

* * * * *

A countess, surely, cannot be expected to dine with a mere citizen, no matter what his credentials.

* * * * *

The gods have passed but they are immortal. They have won out in the end.

* * * * *

A deliberate attempt to avoid being awkward inevitably results in gaucheness, either physical or mental.

* * * * *

The middle class is incapable of intellectual enthusiasm because it sees no distinction between the literal and the figurative.

* * * * *

The middle class regularly vilifies the past in an effort to reconcile satiety and guilt.

* * * * *

Sex is God's greatest joke on mankind.

* * * * *

The sentence: "The countess was accused of being a snob because she deigned not to leave her posh appartments at 4 P.M. in order to greet her visitors" would not have been understood by the literate Elizabethan.

* * * * *

The arts represent, both for the esthetican and the un-educated, something un-natural.

* * * * *

The proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss" is unclear. Which, if either, is to be commended--the stone which rolls or the moss which fails to adhere?

* * * * *

Reality and a representation of reality are easily confused. The esthete and the uneducated often do so. To mistake a representation of a representation of reality for a representation of reality is naive. Such is the dominion of the half-educated.

* * * * *

Art is not possible without the acknowledgment that the present is not an end in itself. This is why the middle class is inartistic.

* * * * *

Mankind's only common denominator is found about a foot below the navel. Mankind's only un-common denominator is found about a foot above the shoulders.

* * * * *

Art provides a palliation of the pain of enduring reality.

* * * * *

Self-hate, unlike self-love, is not always infertile.

* * * * *

The untutored masses have always rejected modern art. This they do because it implicitly proclaims their principal, but generally unconscious and often unarticulated fear--their own death.

* * * * *

The voice of the middle class should, of course, be heard--but not directly and only once every fifty years.

* * * * *

The middle class is most tractable when told what to think.

* * * * *

Queen Victoria's bonnets reminded the world, once again, that headgear can be expressive.

* * * * *

Great acts of cruelty are warranted, it appears, only when carried out under the aegis of organized religion.

* * * * *

Public transportation, at its worst, is inconvenient or exhausting, at its best, exhilarating or edifying.

* * * * *

Solitude can be cacophonous, especially when one is forced to live in a reduced state.

* * * * *

The imprecision of yellow is its most explicit quality.

* * * * *

Music is a necessary anodyne because the world is too dreadful to be continuously confronted.

* * * * *

The English must live on an island. They need to be surrounded by water.

* * * * *

My strongest objections to "middle class morality" are primarily phonological.

* * * * *

The only way to explain to the Englishman the nature of that room found in the American house known as the "den" is to frequently allude to the bathroom.

* * * * *

The educated philistine would be well advised to always remain silent.

* * * * *

Prince Albert's greatest accomplishment was his discovery that the color gray need not exist.

* * * * *

The newspaper is a highly accurate index of the inconsequential thoughts and actions of historically unimportant individuals.

* * * * *

The rich are patrons of the arts. The affluent patronize their friends.

* * * * *

After having seen Canaletto's paintings, Venice is a disappointment.

* * * * *

We admire most in others those qualities we despise in ourselves.

* * * * *

Most men are awe-struck of the brilliant but only admire gaucheness and stupidity.

* * * * *

Biological evolution cannot be prevented by adhering to rigid ethical codes. The middle class, after all, is not what it used to be.

* * * * *

In home furnishings, as in thought, the middle class insists on benign uniformity.

* * * * *

Prepackaged food and slang have this in common--both are bland expedients which should be used only in emergencies.

* * * * *

Simplicity cannot be overpraised.

* * * * *

The French court perfected the fine art of doing nothing,
and did likewise, historically.

* * * * *

Insouciance must be willed in order to be convincing,
otherwise it is most unbecoming.

* * * * *

The great formless multitude descends twice daily into
the subway, and in so doing ascends to the realm of
poetry.

* * * * *

The "nouveau riche" performs a vital function in the
history of art. He is the guardian and defender of the
unnecessary, the popular, and the non-aesthetic. As such,
he accelerates the process of history by separating the
vulgar from the worthwhile.

* * * * *

When we are not on the brink of self-pity we are ready
to immolate someone else for what we know to be our own
sins.

* * * * *

There's nothing like a good proverb for letting you
know that you are not alone.

* * * * *

If France were an island, French grammar, like English wine,
would be nonexistent.

* * * * *

If England were not an island, English pronunciation,
like French wine, would be logical.

* * * * *

Mass education, like mass entertainment, is said to be
effective only when it reaffirms.

* * * * *

Those people who walk like gorillas probably prefer bananas to plums.

* * * * *

Heteromorphous, like rhizocephalous, castrametation, prothonotarial, discountenance, and crinkum-crankum, contains fourteen letters.

* * * * *

Queen Victoria performed a great service for the English--she demonstrated that monarchy not only endures but triumphs.

* * * * *

Under Louis-Philippe the citizens of France learned only one thing--how to play a proper game of whist.

* * * * *

Those people who gesticulate in excess would rather use sticks than words as means of communication.

* * * * *

The thoughts and gestures of the middle class have this in common--both are mechanical and utterly lacking in subtlety.

* * * * *

Repetitive gestures are often empty, but occasionally transcend themselves.

* * * * *

The half-educated man, like the small child, invariably confuses quantity with quality.

* * * * *

It is erroneous to believe that English, when spoken slowly and loudly, is immediately comprehensible to all people.

* * * * *

The need for recognition is the permanent Bestia Trionfans that sends the artist, once again, back into the arena.

* * * * *

Governments that fail to support artists insure the survival of art.

* * * * *

If nothing else, the middle class knows three things:
(1) baseball statistics, (2) the price of beer, (3) the latest Hollywood scandal.

* * * * *

To appreciate French "belles lettres" from the Renaissance to the Revolution we must acknowledge the value of indelible ink. To appreciate French "belles lettres" after the Revolution we must recognize that the eraser can be a useful tool.

* * * * *

If Moses had been English, the Reformation would not have been necessary.

* * * * *

The creation of art is an auditory phenomenon. One need only listen for the flutter of wings.

ADDENDA

ADDENDUM I: SOL LUCET OMNIBUS

FIFTEEN ADDITIONAL APHORISMS CULLED BY THE AUTHOR
FROM THIRTY YEARS OF DEVASTATING EXPERIENCE ON THE
PLANET EARTH, AND WRITTEN DOWN DURING THE FINAL DAYS
OF SEPTEMBER IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE
HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOUR, TO BE USED, LIKE THE PRECEDING
ONE HUNDRED, IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN, IN THE TRAINING
OF HOUSEHOLD STAFFS, AND IN THE ACCLIMATIZATION OF THE
NON-INDIGENOUS.

The poet is he who concedes that the toothache and the tooth are, at the same time, mutually interdependent and independent phenomena, and who then proceeds to speak of the tongue.

* * * * *

There are many instances in life in which we please no one-- not even ourselves.

* * * * *

Most poets are despised not for what they say, but for what they withhold.

* * * * *

In attire, as in thought, the middle class derives great pleasure in appearing "endimanché."

* * * * *

The road to hell, we are told, is paved with good intentions. That being the case, we must assume that those currently in paradise are spiritual gate crashers.

* * * * *

The greatest joy of solitude is that one is always in the presence of distinguished company.

* * * * *

Most people would be much happier if poetry were prose.

* * * * *

Patience, not brute force, should be exercised in the acquisition of an education. One cannot, after all, pull open a rosebud.

* * * * *

Poetry asks questions but supplies no answers. Prose asks no questions but supplies answers.

* * * * *

Human relationships, like human beings, are either alive or dead.

* * * * *

Art, to be sure, can be entertaining. The purpose of art, however, is not entertainment.

* * * * *

During the Renaissance creative artists re-affirmed the classical Greek belief that most men enjoy a great lie.

* * * * *

In new editions of old books, as in new editions of old friends, it is only the revisions and amendments that must be thoroughly assessed.

* * * * *

Those people who pluralize compound nouns, such as brother-in-law, by adding an "s" to the ultimate component, like those who make nouns such as "poet" and "sculptor" feminine, are (1) unsubtle, (2) partially educated, and (3) intolerant.

* * * * *

The only disadvantage to living in the country is that in order to do so one must leave the city.

ADDENDUM II: SOL LUCET OMNIBUS

THIRTY ADDITIONAL APHORISMS CULLED BY THE AUTHOR
FROM THIRTY ONE YEARS OF DEVASTATING EXPERIENCE ON THE
PLANET EARTH, AND WRITTEN DOWN DURING THE FINAL DAYS
OF JANUARY IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE
HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIVE, TO BE USED, LIKE THE PRECEDING
ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN, IN THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN, IN
THE TRAINING OF HOUSEHOLD STAFFS, AND IN THE ACCLIMATIZATION
OF THE NON-INDIGENOUS.

The middle classes are prevented from appreciating the arts by several factors, not the least of which is their obtuseness.

* * * * *

The American diner, like the French café, is ubiquitous, predictable, and aggressively middle class.

* * * * *

Those who fail to pronounce the (e) in "art deco" as $\left[\bar{a} \right]$ invariably mispronounce "liqueur," "maître d'hôtel," and "sommelier."

* * * * *

The similarity of the middle classes to cows is not, as is generally believed, solely a matter of physical comportment.

* * * * *

The imperfectly tutored reject eclecticism as woefully unfocused, indolent and wanton. This is because they erroneously believe that education and specialization are synonymous.

* * * * *

Whenever the middle classes consciously address themselves to the passage of time, they mawkishly dredge up the concept "nostalgia," which, of course, is related to history as brute force is related to reason.

* * * * *

Those who insist on "standing on line" more often than not reject the figurative as not only invalid but extravagant.

* * * * *

The partially educated regularly mistake history and "nostalgia," just as they do religion and religiosity.

* * * * *

The well bred man is not he who never upsets a sauceboat at dinner, but rather he who does not notice it if someone else does.

* * * * *

In the theater, the moneyed philistines of the middle classes customarily applaud at the wrong moment. Will they ever learn to take their cues from the balcony?

* * * * *

Those people who delight in "literary excerpts" or "musical highlights" and not in complete works insist on seeing works of art from their own point of view and not from that of the artist. They are selfish and are to be eschewed.

* * * * *

Without the ticketholders of the parterre the arts could not survive financially. Without those of the balcony artists could not survive emotionally.

* * * * *

The uneducated philistine wallows in "content." The educated philistine luxuriates in "form." The former rejects modern art, the latter worships modernity.

* * * * *

The Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs, it must be recalled, took place in Paris in 1925 and not in Bloomingdale's.

* * * * *

Art is neither male nor female, just as it is neither moral nor immoral.

* * * * *

Those who see no distinction between the verbs "to bring" and "to take" more often than not pronounce the penultimate syllable of the noun "flutist" (one who plays the flute) as they do the monosyllabic transitive verb "flout" (to treat with contemptuous disregard).

* * * * *

Those who feel that "culture" is a commodity, like those who believe that salvation is for sale, are not to be scorned, for it is they who, in a large measure, financially support both the arts and organized religion.

* * * * *

The artist is he who is capable of simultaneously experiencing the past and the future in the present.

* * * * *

The ticketholders of the parterre ask two things, above all, of that which takes place on stage: 1) that it never question, but rather reaffirm, orthodox beliefs; 2) that it entertain not enlighten. They make the same demands of their children.

* * * * *

That the middle classes were once an integral part of the proletariat is easily seen when they are observed at table.

* * * * *

The educated philistine is incapable of distinguishing innovations from gimmicks, just as he cannot differentiate between art and entertainment.

* * * * *

The balletomane, unlike the opera lover, is not troubled by constant audience chatter.

* * * * *

The middle classes are interested in the recent past in much the same manner that most animal mothers are concerned with the placentae of their offspring. Neither understands what it devours, or why.

* * * * *

The parterre of the Elizabethan theater was occupied by the lowest socio-economic orders. At the present time, it is occupied by the moneyed philistines of the middle classes.

* * * * *

Nineteenth-century mimetic art is a proclamation of life; twentieth-century mimetic art is a proclamation of death. The former celebrates, the latter embalms.

* * * * *

Those people who enter or exit from theaters and concert halls during the performance of a work of art insist on imposing their point of view on the spatial and temporal structure that is art. They are boorish and are to be eschewed.

* * * * *

The world of nature, like that of art, is governed by its own internal timetable. Desdemona cannot be made to die in Act I no more than a seed can be made to sprout.

* * * * *

To recognize the inseparability of form and content is to know the meaning of tolerance.

* * * * *

Some people raise their fists, others their voices. Still others raise their eyebrows. With whom would you prefer to take tea?

* * * * *

If art did not exist, one might be tempted to take reality seriously.

. *****

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FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES DURING AND SUBSEQUENT
TO HER EMIGRATION, AND HERE FAITHFULLY TRANS-
SCRIBED AND PAINSTAKINGLY ANNOTATED BY THE
EDITOR IN THE HOPE THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS
MIGHT BETTER LEARN TO APPRECIATE THEIR
ANTECEDENTS.

S. Robert Powell
September 1974

Editor's Preface

The circumstances which have led to the publication of this volume are, briefly, these.

During the final years of the reign of our late beloved monarch, the Editor--while engaged in research on various historical and aesthetic topics, including an examination of "the importance of English thought in continental and French belles-lettres"--chanced to learn that the epistolary holdings of the Haddington Foundation were not only vast, but also had never, in all probability, been examined in detail. The Editor was much interested by them; and expressed the interest which he felt.

The archivist in charge of primary documents at the Haddington Foundation graciously granted the Editor permission to read those letters. Having done so, it occurred to the Editor that some of those letters, particularly those addressed by the Countess L**** to her intimate friends and acquaintances during and subsequent to her emigration, might be made into an edifying book. The Editor interrupted his research on various historical and aesthetic topics and applied to the Governors of the Haddington Foundation for permission to edit such a compilation. Permission was granted on the following conditions: (1) that the impression be strictly limited to a single edition of thirty-six copies, and (2) that the names of those persons who receive this volume be chosen, and duly recorded, by the Haddington Foundation Governors in council. The Editor was pleased to comply with those stipulations.

The Editor thinks he should not be doing justice to the letters of the Countess L****--not doing what, if they were any other person's letters which were entrusted to his editing, he should do--if he were to forbear giving utterance to the thoughts which occurred to him in reference to the Notes to this volume.

The Notes, which have been inobtrusively placed on separate pages following each letter, are intended as guides for those readers who may have forgotten an occasional fact about the historical period or persons in question. The majority of readers will not, in all likelihood, find it necessary to refer to the Notes, but will read, without interruption, only the words of the Countess L****. Primum vivere, deinde philosophari.

The Editor

Tuesday morning
On the high seas

Dearest Mélisande,¹

You will, no doubt, be surprised to learn that my accomodations on this important voyage are, although not entirely to my taste, adequate. So much I miss not having one of Edgar's² boats³ at my disposal. One thing he did know, poor soul, was the precise measure of my spatial needs.

Shortly after we sailed,⁴ I was informed by an officer of doubtful reputation and tenuous social standing, that there are three hundred and eighty-six passengers on the HMS Livingston.⁵ I shall, therefore, with great speed, make the necessary arrangements for my first "grande levée"--to be held on the third day out.⁶ (I do know, dearest Mélisande, and you need not remind me, that it is not the usual custom to hold a "levée" at sea--but, then, it is not every day that I decide to emigrate to Australia!⁷) Since, as you know, I am accustomed to having only eighty-six at a single "levée," there will be some who will probably feel neglected and left out--perhaps they can be placated by a "drawing-room."

How I shall miss my beloved Albion! my intimate friends, their urbanity, the ineffable joy of twilight in my "jardin."⁸ We English are a marvelous people!

I have discovered that there are only six mortals on the Livingston, in addition to myself, of course, whose names appear in the London Register,⁹ three of whom are in commerce. Mélisande, fate has been cruel to me. But, then.....

Mélisande, you will send me a note of cheer. I have done the correct thing, tell me I have?

Grosses bises,¹⁰



Notes on Letter 1: "Tuesday morning, on the high seas."

1. M^elisande Pritchard, the most intimate of the many friends of the Countess. She and the Countess first met at a fancy-dress ball in the South of England in the Autumn of 1873.
2. Edgar Greene, the deceased third husband of the Countess. The long and tumultuous "friendship" of Edgar and the Countess--ultimately resulting in their marriage in 1869 in October--dates from 1867. In that year Edgar (who contracted "une maladie *écossaise*" thirteen months and four days after he and the Countess were married, and promptly died therefrom) was in Scotland for the Autumn Hunts, his particular pleasure. During that season, Edgar was introduced to the Countess, an occasional visitor to Wicksbury Manor, the ancestral property of the Count L****, childhood friend of Edgar Greene.
3. Prior to his meeting with the Countess, the most memorable event in Edgar Greene's life was his sudden acquisition of several steamship lines in 1865 subsequent to the death of his father, Wilfred Greene. The elder Greene, an advisor to Lord Cardigan during the Crimean campaigns, acquired his great fortunes, it is believed, by having acquired certain properties in Asia Minor for a mere pittance in 1856 and by having disposed of same in the following year for a great fortune.
4. In his journal, the second officer of the bridge described that day--June 18, 1876--as follows: "Weather calm, breeze from the South West. In short, an English day." It is not clear whether this is the same officer who informed the Countess as to the number of passengers on board the Livingston.
5. The HMS Livingston was set into service in 1868. A durable vessel of the traditional English sort, noted for its spacious state rooms and promenade decks. The precise location of the state rooms of the Countess is not clear. In all probability, however, she occupied the "Marlborough Suite."
6. A "levée" on the second day out would have been impossible inasmuch as the Countess hardly had time to scrutinize and evaluate her fellow passengers.

(Notes on Letter 1, page 2)

7. Careful research has established that the "grande levée" held by the Countess on the third day out was the first "grande levée" ever to be conducted on board an English vessel. The "petite levée" of the Duchesse de Claremont on board the HMS Marquisat in October 1876 is not, as is popularly believed, the first "levée" ever to be conducted on board an English vessel at sea. The well-established tradition of the "levée sur l'eau," therefore, dates from that "levée" held by the Countess on the HMS Livingston on June 21, 1876. The careful reader will want to refer to the exhaustive study of the "levée" undertaken by Basil C. V. P. Wolcott in 1882 and published in 1884 entitled The Levée (petite et grande) and its importance in English and French history and thought.
8. The "jardin" of the Countess, according to contemporary accounts, was one of the most extraordinary in London. In his treatise on the subject, Pierpont Glade remarked: "Surely one of our most remarkable lieux naturels, especially at the close of day."
9. Those six are as follows:

Seton P. Seton--government
Winston Osgoode--literature
Sir Michael Pennington--foreign affairs
Peter Mann--wool
Charles Wainwright--textiles
Robert Willoughby--merchant.

(Mann, Wainwright, and Willoughby, to be sure, are the lesser lights in this Pleiades of decorum and taste.)
10. A complimentary close learned by the Countess during an extended stay in France, and here used to address her intimate friend Mélisande.

Saturday, the 22nd

Dear Webster,¹

Webster, I am disappointed! Montgomery and Blake Ltd. has committed a dreadful crime. (I thank God that Thursday has come and gone!) Now I fully understand the actions of Edward VI with reference to your firm.

The seven wicker settees² that I ordered from Montgomery and Blake Ltd. were not all delivered on board the HMS Livingston. Where are my three missing settees?

You will, I trust, look into this matter. The necessary arrangements will, I am confident, be made so that my three settees arrive in Melbourne³ in time for my disembarkation there.

My thanks to you.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "The Countess". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline.

The Countess

Notes on Letter 2: "Saturday, the 22nd."

1. Webster Montgomery, director of Montgomery and Blake Ltd., former suitor for the hand of the Countess. The friendship of Webster and the Countess was inevitable, given the importance of each of their families in the history of England. A paternal ancestor of Webster's, it is claimed, a one Reewold Munthloomerie, born in 1170, was the second cousin of Hadwisa, hieress of the Earl of Gloucester and first wife of King John. A maternal ancestor of the Countess', it has been established, a certain Marguerite of Anjou, born in 1136, was the daughter of Matilda, daughter of Henry I and Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou, and first wife of Henry II.

The firm of Montgomery and Blake Ltd., like the lineages of the Countess and of Webster Montgomery, can be traced to the twelfth century. Reewold Munthloomerie, it appears, was, in 1213, largely through the efforts of Hadwisa, named Purveyor of Wykere to the Court of Jean Sans Terre, the fifth son of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine. During John's campaigns on the continent in order to retake the fiefdoms of Maine and Normandy, it was Reewold who furnished the royal tent with "chaizes en wickeere bien confortibles."

Reewold formed a partnership with Godfroi Bleek in 1218. Royal patronage was, **regrettably**, lost under Edward VI and has never been regained.

2. Inasmuch as the Countess was supplied with only four settees, her first "levée" lasted an extraordinary three hours and ten minutes. This is explained, in part, by the fact that seven complete and one incomplete round had to be conducted! Had the full complement of settees been supplied, only three rounds would have been necessary, and the "levée" would have taken only the prescribed one hour and a half.
3. Melbourne was chosen, it is thought, because of its geographical position--equidistant from Ballarat and Launceton, on the island of Tasmania.

Sunday Morning
Gibraltar in view ¹

Cecil dear, ²

Sea travel is such a tonic. These past days my mind has been momentarily, and most pleasantly, diverted from the bitter realities which force me from England.

As you may have heard from Mélisande,³ I am confronted with the immitigable necessity of voyaging upon these waters in the company of largely deplorable mountebanks--smallish squires from Norfolk and Somerset, untutored citizens from the South (Devon, I believe) and their obedient and opaque wives and families, obscure French dilettantes, merchants and such.⁴ A great many of my fellow passengers give me the impression of never having felt anything very much. (You will excuse me if my tone seems horribly worldly, but one must take that point of view sometimes).

Amidst this rabble (how is it possible?) there is one, however, who appears to be equipped to do battle in "le grand monde." Allow me to explain.

You better than all others know that it is not my habit to contract friendships while traveling, particularly at sea.⁵ (I don't want everyone to like me--I should, as it were, think less of myself if some people did!)⁶ However, one of the votaries at my "levée" on the twenty-first, a one Robert Northwoode, is, quite simply, the incarnation of propriety and civilization. I have--please forgive my almost primitive directness--for his person great admiration (I find him excessively attractive), and for his society--in spite of his lamentable parentage--an emphatic predilection.⁷ Words fail me. I felt you should know of this turn of events.

Affectionately,



Notes on Letter 3: "Sunday Morning, Gibraltar in view."

1. The HMS Livingston sailed (according to the journal of the second officer of the bridge) on June 18, 1876 from Southampton. Since Gibraltar is, as the Countess reports, "in view," it is probable that this letter was written on the fifth day out--June 23, 1876.
2. Cecil Ashton, who is described by the Countess in the preparatory sketches of My Life and Times as "a great good friend," is, in fact, the second cousin of the Countess. It was in his company that the Countess first undertook an extended sea voyage. That voyage aboard the HMS Pembroke (the Countess was twenty-four at the time) lasted seven weeks--the HMS Pembroke sailed along the Southern coast of England to Torquay, then on to Saint Helier and, after a ten-day interlude on the Ile of Wight, back to Portsmouth. During that voyage Cecil offered--in French--the following advice to the Countess: "Méfie-toi des petits-esprits." The Countess--who never forgot this dictum and who refers to it as "The Pembroke Statement" in her journals--and Cecil became friends for life.
3. It is entirely possible that the information contained in the letter dated "Tuesday Morning, on the high seas," addressed to Melisande Pritchard, came to the attention of Cecil Ashton. Both frequented the same salons in London and would, doubtless, have discussed the Countess and her departure from England.
4. Given the motley nature of the passengers on board the HMS Livingston it is not surprising that there should be those who liked and those who disliked the Countess. Not surprisingly, it was the smallish squires and their wives and the French dilettantes who took an unwarranted dislike for the Countess. A one Hugette de Chevrolle chose, one morning at breakfast, to make unflattering allusions as to the probable age of the Countess. In a moment of sardonic quiet the Countess volunteered: "Yes, it is true. I represent another age, another world. I come "de très très loin." I appear in several of Raphael's finest frescoes." Hugette de Chevrolle, of course, made no reply.
5. Cecil had once been rather strongly rebuffed by the Countess for suggesting that she be more receptive to those who came into her presence. Words were exchanged, it is reported, and Cecil and the Countess never spoke of the matter again.

(Notes on Letter 3, page 2)

6. In this instance, as in numerous others in her letters and writings, the Countess' style, it should be noted, approaches the aphoristic. Such a style, in all probability, was inevitable, given "The Pembroke Statement."
7. This admiration of the Countess for Robert Northwoode is, although not unprecedented, extraordinary. In speaking of emotion the Countess, at this period, customarily employed the past tense. She made no secret of the fact that, as she remarks in her journal entry of March 16, 1876, "the fountain of sentiment, thanks to having been rather violently tapped in 1857, 59, and 67, does not quite flow so freely as of yore."

Genoa, June 30, 1876 ¹

Dearest M  lisande, ²

Would that I, too, might find a retreat in which "to enjoy in peace the fruits of an honoured life!" ³

For the past forty-eight hours Robert and I have enjoyed together this most limpid of Mediterranean cities. Why, do you know, are there no gardens attached to the superb, but heavy appearing, villas which line the Strada Nuova? ⁴ "Faute de jardins," Robert--at my bidding--instructed our cicerone ⁵ yesterday not to stop the carriage on that rather splendid street. Instead, we proceeded directly to the Palazzo Andrea Doria in which, you may have forgotten, there are some frescoes by Pierin del Vaga. Those we examined quickly in order that we might have sufficient time to stroll along the continuous open loggia on the ground floor and along the projecting side colonnades. The gardens are lovely. M  lisande, do you recall the fountain in which is found a statue of Neptune? ⁶ Near that fountain, towards sunset, and seated on the "tapis vert" under the benign regard of the god of the sea, Robert and I exchanged ardent vows of eternal love, undying devotion, and so on. M  lisande, am I being unfaithful to my dear Edgar, and to my beloved Fitzzy? ⁷ Tell me I am not.

Today Robert and I visited the Villa Scassi ⁸ to the West of Genoa. Unlike the gardens at the Villa Andrea Doria which descend from the villa to the sea, those at Scassi ascend the hill behind the villa. Most unusual. In the center of the retaining wall which sustains the second terrace there is a beautifully designed triple niche divided by Atlantides supporting a delicately carved entablature--see enclosed sketch. ⁹ The upper terrace contains a kind of canal flanked by clipped shrubs and statues. Beyond that

Genoa, June 30, 1876

there is a rustic temple with columns carved to resemble the trunks of trees--a perfect transition, as it were, between the "hortus inclusus" below and the park above. In that temple, amid the sylvan freedom of the wooded hill-top, Robert and I again exchanged vows of eternal love, undying devotion, and so on. At the setting of the sun this afternoon, Robert was seized by the "furor poeticus," and took up his pen. How long it has been since I have been likened to Polymnia! Mélisande, I am re-born.

Grosses bises,

A large, elegant, handwritten capital letter 'L' in cursive script, likely representing the letter 'L' for 'Léon' or 'Léonard'.

Notes on Letter 4: "Genoa, June 30, 1876"

1. One hundred and thirteen of the passengers on board the HMS Livingston disembarked at Genoa; seventy-four new passengers embarked. During dinner--as the Livingston departed from Genoa on the 30th of June--the captain informed the Countess that the passengers now numbered three hundred and forty seven.
2. cf. Letter 1, note 1.
3. The Countess here, in all probability, is quoting the Admiral Andrea Doria. On the outer wall of the Villa Andrea Doria--built in 1529 and one of the earliest examples of the great Genoese palazzi--there is an inscription which explains that the great Andrea Doria, "Admiral of the Navies of the Pope, the Emperor, the King of France, and the Republic of Genoa," having purchased the villas Lomellini and Guistiniani on the Western shore of the port of Genoa, and having joined the two estates, created a palazzo in which "to enjoy in peace the fruits of an honoured life."
4. Natural restrictions of site and soil (a thin soil parched by the wind), as well as the severity of the landscape, would suggest that the great Genoese architects were, in this instance, more concerned with architectural quality than naturalistic embellishment--choosing to create their principal effects by means of masonry and sculpture rather than by means of water and verdure. The Strada Nuova is said to be the earliest example in Europe of a street laid out by an architect (Galeazzo Alessi 1512-1572) with deliberate artistic intent, and designed to display the palaces with which he subsequently lined it.
5. Alberto Montefiore (1840-1882), the highly recommended "doyen" of Genoese cicerones.
6. This statue, executed in 1600 by Carloni, is said to be a portrait of the great admiral himself. The admiral's favourite dog, a spaniel named Ruggiero, is similarly commemorated in stone in the gardens. Ruggiero is said to be buried under a colossal statue of Jupiter on the terraced hillside which is situated beyond the "tapis vert" which ascends the hill.
7. cf. Letter 1, note 2.

Harrison Fitzclarence ("Fitzy"), the deceased second husband of the Countess; killed while playing polo at Antibes in the Autumn of 1859.

(Notes on Letter 4, page 2)

8. The most famous of Alessi's villas--Tuscan order below and fluted Corinthian pilasters above, richly carved frieze and cornice, beautiful roof-balustrade. As the Countess has perspicaciously remarked, the gardens at Scassi are singular. Almost alone among Genoese villas, the Villa Scassi stands at the foot of a hill, with the gardens rising behind it instead of descending below it to the sea.

The Countess' interest in--and knowledge of--gardens is great (cf. the description of her English garden in Letter 1, note 8). The Countess' garden is, in addition, of some historical importance. It has been established that scattered sections of The Idylls of the King, most probably "Pelleas and Ettarre" and "The Last Tournament," were conceived in the Countess' garden. The poem Now Sleeps the Crimson Petal, written three years before his marriage to Emily Gellwood, was written by the thirty-eight year old Tennyson during an entertainment in what was to become the garden of the Countess. The Countess, although very young at the time, recalled the incident with the greatest of clarity.

9. This sketch, unfortunately, has not come down to us. Pierpont Glade in Gardens in Her Majesty's Realms (1884) remarks (p. 86): "The vogue of terraced gardens with retaining walls with triple niches divided by Atlantides supporting a delicately carved entablature dates from the late 1870's. The sources of this triple niche--Atlantides motif, although probably Italian, have not been ascertained." In all probability it was this sketch of the terraced gardens at the Villa Scassi sent by the Countess to Melisande Pritchard on June 30, 1876 which initiated the triple niche--Atlantides motif vogue in English landscape gardening, a vogue which continued until the death of Edward VII.

July 3, 1876, Monday
In the Tyrrhenian Sea

Dearest Clive,¹

You and your readers should know than an entertainment took place on board the H.M.S. Livingston Sunday which, I am sure, is epochal. At 8 P.M. last evening, under my direction, a complete performance of Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice was given en bateau! (Clive, dearest, is it possible that my life and the history of art are once again conjoined?²) Monteverdi's La Favola d'Orfeo,³ I'm sure you will agree, is too austere for performance at sea. The production of Orfeo on the 2nd (Gluck's birthday, 1714) was, of course, the Viennese version, which was so moving in 1859.⁴ How can anyone ever forget that season in Paris. That was a year!⁵

Anna Palini and Gabriella Palermo, both of whom came on board at Genoa, sang the principal roles.⁶ The "Che farò senza Euridice" of the former was perfection itself.⁷ Clara Ardsley⁸ sang the role of Amor. In the scene at the tomb of Eurydice and in that of the Elysian Fields--due primarily to the repeated entreaties of the chorus--I consented to assume the role of a shepherdess, and a Blessed Spirit, respectively. The chaste beauty and tranquil felicity of the Blessed Spirits as they led Orfeo to his beloved can not be imagined, particularly as that scene was staged on the Promenade Deck against the radiant Tyrrhenian sky at twilight! Mesdames Palini, Palermo and Ardsley will not disembark, happily, until Ceylon. It therefore seems likely that other maritime entertainments such as that which took place yesterday on the H.M.S. Livingston will be offered in the course of the next two months, entertainments--doubtless other maritime premières will be given--of which you and your readers should know. You, dearest Clive, will be the first in London to know.

Affectionately,



Notes on Letter 5: "July 3, 1876, Monday, In the Tyrrhenian Sea."

1. The friendship of the Countess and Clive, Lord Margate, dates from November 1859 in Paris. Following the loss of "dear Fitzzy" (cf. Letter #4, Note 7) in the Autumn of 1859 the Countess discretely--and temporarily--withdrew from London to her Parisian "hôtel particulier" on the Rue Fortuny, near the Avenue de Villiers. Lord Margate, then studying art in Paris, supplied the Countess not only with invaluable advice during the re-decoration of her continental pied à terre, but also with some fine old damask for the drawing room. Lord Margate became, in the next decade, one of the most respected critics in England. His pronouncements on contemporary art, music, and the theater in Elysium--the biweekly journal which he founded--are, of course, well known.
2. The philanthropy of the Countess is legendary. As early as 1868 she and Edgar Greene (cf. Letter #1, Note 2) were considered the patrons of the arts in Paris. It is generally acknowledged that without the moral and financial support of the Countess and her third husband that the world première of Hamlet by Ambroise Thomas at the Paris Opéra on March 9, 1868, for example, would not have taken place.
3. In Monteverde's La Favola d'Orfeo, as in the standard legend, the loss of Eurydice is irrevocable. Such is not the case, however, in Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice, see Note 7, below.
4. Christoph Willibald von Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice, text in Italian by Raniero da Calzabigi, was first produced at the Burgtheater, Vienna, October 5, 1762. Gluck rewrote the opera, adding much music, for the Paris production of August 2, 1774, using a French text by Pierre Louis Moline. The Viennese version, however, regained its primacy with the Parisian performance of November 19, 1859 at the Théâtre Lyrique. (The English translation of Orfeo ed Euridice undertaken by Fanny Malone Raymond and used for the American première of Orfeo at the Winter Garden in New York on November 25, 1863, although available at the time, was considered puerile and unaesthetic by the Countess and would not, of course, have been used for the maritime première of this important work.) For the Paris production of November 19, 1859 the Countess had taken her usual box. It was that production which the Countess recalled in entirety from memory--particularly the performance of Pauline Viardot-Garcia--and which she faithfully recreated on July 2, 1876 on board the Livingston.
5. The year 1859 was, to be sure, memorable. In addition to the revival of the Viennese version of Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice on November 19 at the Théâtre Lyrique, it should be noted that in September of that year Wagner arrived in Paris--having completed Tristan und Isolde during the Summer--and set up an active establishment in the Rue Newton, near the Etoile. To it came

(Notes on Letter 5, page 2)

the distinguished friends and fashionable acquaintances of Liszt's daughter Blandine and other well-wishers: Emile Ollivier (Blandine's husband and leader of Napoleon's repressed opposition), Frédéric Villot (head of the Imperial Museums), Carvalho (Director of the Lyric Theatre), Cosima Liszt, Hans von Bülow, Gustave Doré, Charles Baudelaire, Hector Berlioz, and others. Also, on November 24, 1859, just five days after the Gluck revival, the first edition--1250 copies--of Darwin's The Origin of Species was published by John Murray.

6. The role of Orfeo, originally written for contralto (the male contralto Guadagni) was, like many other male roles in the operas of the time, rewritten by Gluck for the tenor voice for the Paris performance of August 2, 1774. At the November 19, 1859 performance the role of Orfeo was sung by the noted female contralto Pauline Viardot-Garcia. It is not surprising, then, that the Countess should insist that the principals at the maritime première of Orfeo ed Euridice should be sung by a contralto (Anna Palini) and a soprano (Gabriella Palermo), and not by a tenor and soprano.
7. As Orfeo and Eurydice mount higher and higher from the nether world the latter becomes increasingly downcast because Orfeo seems no longer to love her. Not once have their eyes met. She would rather remain below than return to earth without his love. Orfeo is bound by the agreement not to reveal the cause of his strange behavior. When they are almost in sight of the land of the living, she cries out with such heart-rending pathos that, in a moment of forgetfulness, Orfeo looks back, only to see her sink lifeless to the ground. Now his sorrow is even more profound than before. Utterly disconsolate, he expresses his grief in a melody of sublime pathos, "Che farò senza Euridice." Amor, who has been watching Orfeo, is so deeply moved by this impassioned outcry that he restores Eurydice to life and permits the rejoicing lovers to proceed to the world above.
8. Madame Clara Ardsley, the noted English soprano, having recently completed a triumphant continental farewell tour, is en route to Ceylon where she will rejoin her husband, Sir Arthur Ardsley, the tea magnate.

STATENDAM

**Holland
America
Cruises**



Holland America Cruises

name (please print)

cruise ship

street address, city, state, zip

phone no.

sailing date

room no.

sailing from

please print large numbers

Première lettre de mon conservatoire

October 20, 1974

S. Robert Powell

"Mankind and animals, lions, eagles and partridges, horned deer, geese, spiders, silent fish inhabiting the sea, starfish and those creatures invisible to the naked eye--in short, in a word, all living things, all living things, all living things, having run their sad course, are extinct. Eons have passed since a living soul has stirred on the earth's surface. And this poor moon shines its light in vain. In the meadows the cranes no longer waken with a cry and the May beetles' murmur is silent in the limes. It is cold, cold, cold! Empty, empty, empty! Terrible, terrible, terrible! The bodies of the living creatures have crumbled to dust and as eternal matter metamorphosed into rocks, into water, into clouds, their souls are now as one. That peaceful universal soul is me."¹

"I am stone
I was here first.
And mine are the stories
of the earth."²

To begin to appreciate the conceptual form and content of The Book of Stone by Gail Trebbe it is necessary to see that collection of forty-nine poems (the collection originally contained fifty poems; in the copy before me, however, which was hand delivered by the author, the penultimate poem was removed) in relationship to that re-orientation of artistic thought which occurred during the final decades of the nineteenth century, a re-orientation of thought which, as everyone now agrees, was epochal in significance. Beginning during the final decades of the nineteenth century--to attempt to determine a specific year would be not only hopelessly naive, but also a futile undertaking--the time world of history, it must be understood, was supplanted by the timeless world of myth as the content of art.³ Similarly, and inevitably, temporal form was supplanted by spatial form as the form of art. The imitation of the appearances of beings and things such as they are perceived by the senses (What does the Rouen cathedral look like in the morning sun?) is no longer considered to be the purpose of art. Rather, the purpose of art is to discover, not by recourse to the senses, but by recourse to the intellect, the essential nature of beings and things (What is a cathedral?). This re-orientation of the purpose of art is necessary in that the position of the artist with reference to the work of art has changed. No longer is the artist a consciously detached spectator of empirical reality, a spectator who is not only outside of, but also at a fixed distance from, the reality he represents (mimesis). Rather, the modern artist is a participant in the reality he discovers by abandoning exterior, concrete, and real space and penetrating the immaterial realm of art itself (methexis). Des Esseintes' entry into Fontenay-aux-Roses is informative. In entering Fontenay-aux-Roses Des Esseintes literally enters a work of art which he has

created and of which he is an integral part.

Mimesis, it can be argued, implies "looking at" (from without inwards), methexis, on the other hand, implies "looking within" and "looking out from" (from within outwards). The former shows us merely the mechanism of history. Its art-procedure is mechanical. It gives us the citizen. The latter lays bare the organism of mankind. Its art-procedure is organic. It gives us man. In both instances it is imperative that what is described be described by the artist qua spectator and not by the artist qua artist. The artist, in order to do so, must transcend his individual needs, desires and aspirations. If you would know how an artist who "looks at" successfully separates those seemingly inseparable roles that the artist necessarily occupies, you would be well-advised to read Madame Bovary. If you would know how an artist who "looks within" and "looks out from" successfully separates those roles, you would be well-advised to read The Book of Stone. In both instances, the separation of those roles results in the creation of works of art which are objective records of consciousness. The author, it follows, is a recording consciousness. When the author is "looking at," that objective record of consciousness is necessarily inextricable from a single, and highly particularized, temporal and spatial structure--the time world of history. Read the Bovary. When the author is "looking within" and "looking out from," that objective record of consciousness is outside of time and space. It is a record of the timeless, eternal, and immutable world of myth.

"I am the historian
of the years
and the seasons cannot
cajole or injure me.

I am the scribe
of the mountains
and they form
their existence around me.

I am the mouthpiece
of lost tribes
and I proclaim the fate
of their battles and icons." 4

"I am the prophet
of eternity
and the waves carry my word
to every shore." 5

"Every day the day begins
before me
and revolves
around me." 6

"They are the kings of earth.
When cities fall
they go down with them.
But they stay behind
to teach
their history to the future." 7

"For a million springs, the grass has risen
outside the cave,
and quelled the blood of the hunt.
Still, the mouthpiece of tribes
repeats its magical rites
in dark ignorance." 8

"They will rule eternally,
their only edict
their own immutability.
Every day the day
arrives to weave its
fabric around their legends." 9

The form and content of The Book of Stone, seen as an autonomous aesthetic phenomenon, represent the form and content of modern art (myth not history, spatial form not temporal form). The form and content of the subject of that collection of poetry--stone--similarly represent the form and content of modern art. Modern art, like the stone, is an objective record of consciousness. The modern artist, like the stone, is a recording consciousness. The stone "looks at"; the artist qua spectator "looks within" and "looks out from." The same is true with Flaubert. Emma "looks at," Flaubert "looks within" and "looks out from." Both authors have given "a free-stretching movement to the vortex." The stone is the vortex. ("There lies the unborn/ king of the earth,/ lies there in the dark womb/ punching out space...") 10 Emma is the vortex.

That stone can be an objective record of consciousness is a possibility sensed by Baudelaire:

"La nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
Laisseront parfois sortir de confuses paroles;
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers." 11

What are those "paroles" of which Baudelaire speaks?

"listen those are
our drums we are beating
our music our ritual music." 12

"Still,
from our ancient dreams
we repeat
our cold grey consonants
our solid facts...
our reason for being
in a language of stone." 13

A language of stone. A new language. Laughter. The Stone of Eden laughed. It knew what was going to happen in the garden and calmly sat back and took it all down.

"When the stones/ let go/ of the mountain,/ their
fists become palms/ slapping height/ after height,/ become
fingers/ making signs/ in a new language./ ... It is like
the first/ laughter." ¹⁴ In "tearing holes in dutiful
silence" they transcend not only time but space. New forms.
Freedom. Liberation. They are like Kandinsky's canvases.
"I think how they wish to be liberated from their frames." ¹⁵

The language of stone, to be sure, is not heard by
most men. If it were, we surely would not have such words
as "stone deaf," "stone broke," and "stone blind." The
English language doesn't like stone. Why is English frightened
by stones? "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words
will never hurt me." "To kill two birds with the same stone."
Why do we insist on throwing stones about. "At a stone's
throw." "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone."
Why are we afraid to acknowledge that a stone's place is in
stillness? "I send you off/ on the only journey of your life./
See how often you pause,/ knowing your place/ is in stillness." ¹⁶
Yet, we throw and throw and throw and throw. When will we
hear the language of stone? When will all those erroneous
linguistic associations be done away with? When will all
those erroneous linguistic associations be done away with?
When? When will we all hear the language of stone?

"And the faithful stones
wait beneath their heavens.
They are dreaming of rebirth,
of a new life covered with wool." ¹⁷

NOTES

- 1 Anton Chekhov, The Sea Gull, Act I. These lines are said by Nina--for whom Trigorin conceives his story of the sea gull--as the curtain opens on Konstantine's play.
- 2 Gail Trebbe, The Book of Stone, "Song of the Stone," strophe 12.
- 3 In part II of Opera and Drama, written in 1850-51, Wagner prophetically remarked (the German text is not available): "Je me voyais nécessairement amené à designer le mythe comme matière idéale du poète. Le mythe est le poème primitif et anonyme du peuple, et nous le retrouvons à toutes les époques repris, remanié sans cesse à nouveau par les grands poètes des périodes cultivées. Dans le mythe, en effet, les relations humaines dépouillent presque complètement leur forme conventionnelle et intelligible seulement à la raison abstraite; elles montrent ce que la vie a de vraiment humain, d'éternellement compréhensible, et le montrent sous cette forme concrète, exclusive de toute imitation, laquelle donne à tous les vrais mythes leur caractère individuel que vous reconnaissez au premier coup d'oeil."
- 4 Trebbe, The Book of Stone, "Song of the Stone," strophes 2-4.
- 5 _____, strophe 11.
- 6 _____, "Stone's Purpose," strophe 2.
- 7 _____, "Days of the Stone," strophe 2.
- 8 _____, "Pictures on Cave Walls," (the complete poem).
- 9 _____, "Days of the Stone," strophe 3.
- 10 _____, "Within a Volcano," ll. 1-4.
- 11 Charles Baudelaire, "Correspondances."
- 12 Trebbe, "Sea Pebbles," ll. 9-10.
- 13 _____, "Stonehenge," strophes 7, 8.
- 14 _____, "Avalanche," ll. 1-9, 35-36.
- 15 In a written statement made on October 9, 1974, Gail Trebbe made this remark about Kandinsky's canvases. It is, as we

have attempted to show in this "letter," an important statement not only about Kandinsky's art, but also about The Book of Stone as well.

- 16 Gail Trebbe, "Stone Skimmed on a Lake," (the complete poem).
- 17 _____, "Stones Among Sheep," strophe 4.

Deuxième lettre de mon conservatoire

March 3, 1975

S. Robert Powell

Fry two, over; stack three, two blue, one with bacon;
whole wheat down: Thoughts on diners, mimesis, and synecdoche
occasioned by John Baeder's show at Hundred Acres Gallery,
456 West Broadway, 12/7/74--12/28/74.

A. Judging the book by its cover--the individual and not the type:

The Yankee Clipper is unabashedly obsequious. It will serve the customer just about anything, anytime, anywhere--orders "sur place," orders to go. [Open 24 hrs/ Breakfast/ Luncheon Dinner/ Steaks Chops/ Sea Food/ Fountain Service/ Orders to go] In addition to gratifying the customer's esculent needs, the Yankee Clipper caters to his visual and/or cerebral needs by providing a mechanical newspaper vendor which, like the diner itself, satiates maximally, irrespective of time of day or season. Lisi's Pittsfield Diner, on the other hand, succinctly, although apologetically, proclaims: "Sorry, we're closed." Yet, when it is open it offers a "dining room," which, it goes without saying, strikes one as infinitely more orphic than the "booth service" at the Pullman Diner. Then, again, the Silver Top Diner has "infra-red broiling," it is "air-conditioned" and it serves "vacuolator coffee" (vacuolation--the development or formation of air vesicles in a fluid) -- Is it possible that the Silver Top Diner serves carbonated coffee? Whatever the case, all of the above diners make Scott's Bridge Diner seem almost ascetic and alarmingly prosaic when it laconically announces: "Pepsi." But then, so does Lisi's Pittsfield Diner, but it has a dining room. Similarly, the "Steaks Chops Seafood" of the Blue Sky Diner appears meager and unadorned when seen in conjunction with the same notice at the Yankee Clipper.

All of these clearly articulated individual differences among the diners represented in John Baeder's show, in addition to many others, are highly important from two points of view: 1) from the point of view of the owners of the diners; 2) from the point of view of the realist painter. From the point of view of the owner, these individual differences are intended to be seen as lures/catalysts which cause the motorist or pedestrian to stop and have something to eat, whether he is hungry or not. Diners announce their individuality as if the Underground Gourmet were in the neighborhood. From the point of view of the realist painter, these placarded distinctions, as well as countless other structural, compositional, and material differences, are the raison d'être of the creative act--more about that in Part C of these remarks. Notwithstanding the attractiveness of any or all of the management-announced individual differences, it is not because of them that the hungry motorist/pedestrian, in most instances, stops at a given diner at a given time. It is not atypicality which is the decisive factor, but rather sameness (perhaps in conjunction with propinquity).

B. Judging the book by its cover--the type and not the individual:

The American diner, like the French café, is ubiquitous, predictable, and aggressively middle class. It is for those reasons that one enters a given diner at a given time and not because of any secondary or tertiary embellishments, such as "booth service," "vacuolator coffee," or "pepsi." (Is the sign "Clean Rest Rooms" a primary, secondary, or tertiary embellishment? Since all diners invariably have rest rooms, it seems to be a primary characteristic, the sign itself, therefore, is redundant. In that statement, the word "clean" fulfills the same function as the word "vacuolator"--both are secondary embellishments to the concepts "rest room" and "coffee," respectively. Does the customer really expect the rest rooms (enter Euphues) to be clean or the coffee (Turk kahve)

to be better because it is vacuolated? Probably not. "Clean French Provincial Rest Rooms" and "Imported Vacuolator Coffee"--in such a situation "French Provincial" and "Imported" are, it would follow, tertiary embellishments). The highly stereotyped architectural configuration of the diner, like that of the church, for example, communicates on the primary level. Both elicit highly particularized conditioned responses: the shape of the former means "place to eat," the shape of the latter means "place to worship." Individual architectural and design differences are relatively unimportant. Is this "place of worship" made of stone, wood, brick? Is this "place to eat" using infra-red broilers? Are the ventilators on this diner shaped like helmets (The Silver Top Diner), or are they of the spinning variety (The Pullman Diner)? Does this diner have six, eight, or ten windows? It is the shape of the diner which is important. The hungry motorist/pedestrian sees the type and not the individual. The name of the diner itself is not important, although most diners declare their names clearly, wanting to be seen both as individuals and as types. Scott's Bridge Diner is most interesting in this respect. Unlike the other diners painted by John Baeder, it identifies itself primarily as an architectural entity, and secondarily as an architectural entity which is located near a bridge which has been named after someone by the name of Scott. Day or night, one cannot help but read one of the four and one half signs--all of which are, to a large extent, superfluous. The signs are redundant in much the same way that a sign bearing the word "tree" would be redundant when hung on a tree. The non-indigenous and hungry motorist/pedestrian does not need to know who owns a given diner (Lisi's Pittsfield Diner), nor does he care. Granted, it may be helpful and/or interesting to know that one is in Pittsfield, or that a given bridge (hopefully near the diner) is named after someone named Scott. The non-indigenous and

hungry motorist does not inquire of the person who fills his gas tank at 2 A.M. in small town America: "Can you tell me where the nearest four star restaurant is?" or "Where is the nearest diner with infra-red broiling?" but, rather, "Where's the nearest diner?" The owners of Scott's Bridge Diner have, then, spent their advertising money wisely (congratulations). Not only is it a question of largely stereotyped exterior characteristics, but interior as well. The menus, the food, the clientele, the employees, and the rest rooms are--allowing, of course, for inconsequential differences--identical. The middle classes, it must be recalled, are frightened by significant deviations from the mean. A cheeseburger special is a cheeseburger special. The urinals always have deodorizing disks in them which look like white hockey pucks. There is a Rosy in virtually every diner in America, and every one of them is probably jealous of the one who appears on television with her Bounty towels. (The customarily announced "Steaks Chops Sea Food" is interesting on this account. It appears to be one of those public statements, like "Caution: the surgeon general has determined that cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health," which one often accidentally reads--or is forced to read--but which contains no message, the issue being, of course, "food" or "cigarette," and not "kind of food" or "effect on health.") It is this quality of sameness--architectural, anthropological, linguistic--which, as I shall explain below, eventually causes the demise of the diner as an economically viable institution in America.

C. Mimesis and Synecdoche:

The psychic presupposition of much contemporary American art, like that of much art in the West from the Italian Renaissance to the final decades of the nineteenth century, is the "urge to empathy," a psychic urge which results, in most cases, in what is variously referred to as mimetic or realist or representational art. This, of course, does not mean that the realist art of the

late nineteenth century in France, for example, and that of the third quarter of the twentieth century in America are identical. Particular and significant differences between the representational art created in both of these periods are, to be sure, scrutable. Similarities, however, do exist.

The mimetic art of both of these historical periods pursues a program of realism. Finite objects such as they are perceived by the senses (primarily optical experience) are represented analytically in conjunction with a clearly articulated temporal structure. Each of Monet's "Haystacks," for example, is analytically represented in a moment of time. For Monet and for many of his contemporaries, the temporal structure of prosaic empirical reality is seen as an entirely positive phenomenon. All objects and people are in time and are, it goes without saying, consumed or destroyed by time. They are, then, different at every moment of their existence. From the point of view of the painter this means that the same object can be painted repeatedly and it will always appear different--the poplars, the haystacks, the water lillies, the Rouen Cathedral. Far from regretting that temporal movement, Monet luxuriates therein. The realist painter of the third quarter of the twentieth century, similarly, analytically represents finite objects such as they are perceived by the senses, in conjunction with a clearly stated temporal structure. Unlike the realists of the nineteenth century, however, those of the twentieth regret the passage of time. Nineteenth-century mimesis is, in many respects, synonymous with "celebration"; twentieth-century mimesis is synonymous with "lament." In this respect, twentieth-century realist art is similar to early nineteenth-century Romantic art. There are concertos written both for and against the piano. Is nineteenth-century realism for the passage of time? Is twentieth-century realism against the passage of time? Such may be the case. In reviewing John Baeder's show in the Soho News, John Gruen remarks:

"Done in the Photo Realist syle, they (the diners) emerge like pristine havens of comfort. But they are dead and deadly." What, specifically, does Gruen mean by that? Does he mean that because they are painted in the photorealist style they emerge like pristine havens of comfort? Does he mean that even though the diners are painted in the photorealist style, a style which makes them look like pristine havens of comfort, they are dead and deadly? The lack of clarity in Gruen's remarks, notwithstanding, he underlines an important quality which is characteristic of much representational art in the twentieth century--the elegiac. Why does the mimetic art of the third quarter of this century lack the élan vital of nineteenth-century mimetic art? The answer, it seems, is that the finite world analytically represented by the reality-affirming artists of this century is portrayed from an absolute point of view, whereas that same world is portrayed from a relative point of view by the representational painters of the nineteenth century. The Rouen Cathedral, as portrayed by Monet, is in time. The Blue Sky Diner, as portrayed by Baeder, is not in time. Monet's subjects are immersed in empirical time; Baeder's are suspended in a kind of eternal time, a time world not unlike that of much medieval art. It is for that reason, perhaps, that Gruen has ill-advisedly dredged up (perhaps he created them himself) stillborn and wholly vapid figurative expressions such as the following in order to characterize Baeder's works: "... painting them (the diners) as though they were shrines of beauty. They sparkle, and look like stunning dashes in a meaningless sentence. ... like pristine havens of comfort... They are deserted shrines--monuments to vacuity and boredom." (underlining is mine). As a speaker of English I am embarrassed by Gruen's elephantine use of figurative language. What, may I ask, does a shrine of beauty--deserted, if you please--look like? Where may I observe a stunning dash? a pristine haven of comfort? Gruen's remarks are revelatory of only

one thing--his imperfect understanding of mimetic art. For Gruen, the creation of representational art (perhaps all art) appears to be synonymous with the wholly offensive and condescending phrase, "reverential treatment." The creation of art is not a beautification process. Diners are, in all probability, as Gruen states, "the lowest architectural denominator in the arid wasteland of neon-lit, small town, small time America." They need not, however, be presented as anything other than themselves in order to be a sufficient basis for art. The diners painted by John Baeder are not presented as "shrines of beauty," "stunning dashes," "pristine havens of comfort," or as "monuments of vacuity and boredom." They are presented as ends in themselves--entirely sufficient bases for the creation of art. Lisi's Pittsfield Diner is presented as Lisi's Pittsfield Diner. The Yankee Clipper is the Yankee Clipper. [The names and shapes of diners are derived, apparently, not only from railroads--the Pullman Diner--but also from airplanes--the original "Yankee Clipper," I recently learned, was a Pan Am plane which, on May 20, 1939, took off from Port Washington, New York for Europe and thereby began the first regular passenger service across the Atlantic]. Gruen's inept gavotte with figurative language clearly implies that neon-lit small town America is an insufficient basis for the creation of art. Mimetic art, whether that of the nineteenth century or that of the twentieth, is founded primarily on optical experience or knowledge. The objects presented are what they appear to be. Gruen implies that some subjects are more appropriate for art than others. A "pristine haven of comfort," for example, could be painted "as is," and be a valid work of art. A diner, on the other hand, must be transformed with "reverence" in order to become a sufficient basis for art. Gruen, then, I expect, would favor an academy as a guardian of taste. That same academy might issue annual prizes. Je vous en prie.

Prosaic empirical reality, as everyone now agrees, is a sufficient content for art. When that content is assigned an appropriate aesthetic form, a work of art is created. This does not mean, of course, that the boundaries between art and life are automatically dissolved. The diners painted by John Baeder, for example, remain "imitations." They do not collapse into "illusions," at least not for the intelligent spectator. [While attending a water color show in a gallery near Hundred Acres Gallery--several of Baeder's water colors were exhibited there-- I observed a housefly mistake an imitation for an illusion. After hovering about several paintings he descended, with what appeared to be great resolve, on Janet Fish's Tomatoes, a pastel on paper]. Certain contemporary artists are, like the ancients, obsessed with the possibility of illusion, thinking him the great artist whose painted grapes are pecked at by duped birds. Such, it seems, is the antithesis of an aesthetic success. What specifically marks the pleasure in mimetic art is that what we are witnessing is non-real, that what we are seeing is a representation of reality and not reality. An internalization of the conventions of theater, for example, makes it virtually impossible for the rational adult to believe that what is happening on stage is happening really, however realistic the enactment. We do not believe that that man (Tristan) dies, that that piece of marble is a woman (Aphrodite), that that painting is where I had lunch (Scott's Bridge Diner), that that painting is what I had for lunch (the tomato). Yet, children and the inartistic invariably offer unsolicited advice to the about-to-be-murdered heroine. One hears weeping in theaters. The uneducated literally attack works of art (On May 21, 1972, Laszlo Toth, a Hungarian born emigr  to Australia, battered with a hammer Michelangelo's Pieta). All of the preceding beings--human and otherwise--have not or can not internalize the "formal" conventions of art. They are unaware of the fact that

the content of art is, by definition, inseparable from an aesthetic form. For that reason they under-distance the art object and include it within the sphere of their personal needs, desires, fears, and aspirations. Because of the conceptual forms of art, reality is placed at an aesthetic or psychical distance. Only from that distance can aesthetic appreciation take place. The hungry peasant, for example, cannot be expected to appreciate a film about Louis XIV's rise to power, no more than the average Occidental can appreciate Chinese landscape painting. If the psychical distance is too small (the peasant) the spectator becomes emotionally involved and aesthetic appreciation cannot take place. If the psychical distance is too great (the Occidental) the spectator is indifferent and aesthetic appreciation cannot take place. There must be, then, an utmost decrease of distance without its disappearance. The child who cries out advice to Desdemona is under-distanced; the spectator who falls asleep during the Liebestod is over-distanced. Aesthetic distance often implies an actual physical distance. One cannot appreciate a thirteenth-century enamel, for example, from a distance of one hundred yards, no more than one can appreciate aesthetically the facade of a gothic cathedral from a distance of three feet.

The question of aesthetic distance is particularly important in any discussion of mimetic art, for there is a strong tendency, particularly among the partially educated, to under-distance representational art--that same group, it should be noted, generally over-distances non-representational art. The partially educated, in other words, cannot separate themselves--their personal needs, desires, fears, and aspirations--from the art object. They insist on wallowing in content and take great delight only in illusion. They insist that art and life are indistinguishable and judge the former by the amorphous criteria of the latter. They are unaware of the fact that art, by definition, must have cognitive boundaries,

that it must have an aesthetic form. Life, on the other hand, need not have, but can be assigned, an aesthetic form, as Whistler and Wilde have demonstrated.

The cognitive boundaries of the representations of reality created by John Baeder are, as we stated above, clearly articulated--imitation does not collapse into illusion. That being the case, Baeder, like the trompe l'oeil painters of the nineteenth century, benignly renounces the unassimilated signature convention--a convention which in itself helps to establish the cognitive boundaries of the art object--and, to a certain extent, integrates his signature within the representation of reality itself. (Scott's Bridge Diner: J. Baeder, on the blue garbage barrel; Blue Sky Diner: Baeder, on the garbage box on the sidewalk in front of the diner; Lisi's Pittsfield Diner: Baeder, in the window; Yankee Clipper Diner: Baeder, on the sign on top of the building on the right; Pullman Diner: Baeder, on the inside of the first window on the right). The signature on the Pullman Diner, inasmuch as it appears on the inside of the window of the diner, raises the question of methexis and modern art. Is one a spectator of or a participant in the reality represented? Does art imitate life? Does life imitate art? The question of mimesis, not methexis, however, is our central concern here. Why does John Baeder consistently use the assimilated signature convention of trompe l'oeil painting? The spectator is not, I think, being asked to confuse art and reality. Rather, Baeder, like those representational painters who strive for what has been called the photorealist finish, perhaps views the unassimilated signature as a violation of perceptual (visual) knowledge. Whatever the case, we are reminded of Wordsworth's writing his verses on slabs of slate in the wilderness and leaving them there to blend with the natural scene. Yet, as we all know, before abandoning his verses to nature--from whence they came--he took down a copy for his publisher. Similarly, one thinks of

Hitchcock and Renoir who can not resist the temptation to literally include themselves--the former, invariably, the latter, on occasion--in their films. In each case it is not a question of "to sign or not to sign," but rather of "how" to sign. For Baeder, and perhaps for Hitchcock and Renoir, the question of how to sign assumes great importance because their media (painting and the cinema) are primarily visual, and the unassimilated signature in that context, it can be argued, does shock.

The optical information reported by Baeder and into which his signature is integrated, unlike that information reported by the representational painters of the nineteenth century, does not appear to have been derived from the artist's having held up the well sung "mirror" to reality. Rather, one has the impression that John Baeder has used a magnifying glass. If that is in fact the case--or the effect achieved--the important question to ask is, why? The answer, it seems, is that the mimetic impulse is here directed at memorializing the individual qualities and characteristics of an institution which, if not already dead, is rapidly dying. Individual details are therefore recorded with a precision which, at times, transcends the visual capabilities of the naked eye. (It is in part for that reason that the diners painted by John Baeder seem to exist in eternal or absolute time.) The inherent danger, of course, involved in transcending the perceptual capabilities of the naked eye is that one can begin to rely on conceptual or theoretical knowledge, painting not only what one sees but also what one knows to be there. (The question of the importance of conceptual knowledge in representational art, although germane, requires a separate inquiry.) The details catalogued by Baeder--structural, compositional and material--amply demonstrate that all diners are not, it goes without saying, identical, even though they may appear that way to the average (and hungry) motorist/pedestrian. The chain eateries--McDonald's, Burger King, Howard

Johnson's, and the like--have, in fact, capitalized on the fact that the average citizen is unable, perhaps only unwilling, to perceive individual differences. Sameness, in other words, sells. These franchised eateries will not allow the individual and the particular to exist. Ho-Jo cola, Whalers, Whoppers, golden arches, Big Macs--coast to coast. One immediately thinks of Warhol's soup cans. (In the beginning was the word, and the word was made flesh.) The mimetic artists of the third quarter of this century, in the face of what appears to be a national hysteria of homogenization, reaffirm the importance of the individual, the particular, and the local. As such they are reacting against the abstractionists' rejection of representation, as well as against the distortions of expressionism. This reaffirmation of the individual and the particular is, at the same time, a romantic reassertion of the self, the self seen as macrocosme, as a whole and not as a part, as an individual and not as a type. Given that stance, excessive emphasis can easily be placed on the content of art, just as undue importance can be attributed to form in historical periods in which the importance of the individual is de-emphasized--the seventeenth century in France, for example. If the content of art becomes too ascendant, art can easily become propaganda--imitations collapse and become illusions. This is not the case, I think, with the paintings of John Baeder. (Is it the case with the truck and tractor paintings of John Torlakson, John Salt and Ralph Goings? Their paintings, it goes without saying, should be the subject of a separate inquiry.)

The question of synecdoche, mimetic art, and diners remains. (Synecdoche: a figure of speech by which a part is put for the whole--as fifty sail for fifty ships; the whole for a part--as the smiling year for spring; the species for the genus--as cutthroat for assassin; the genus for the species--as a creature for a man; or the name of the material for the thing made--as boards for stage.)

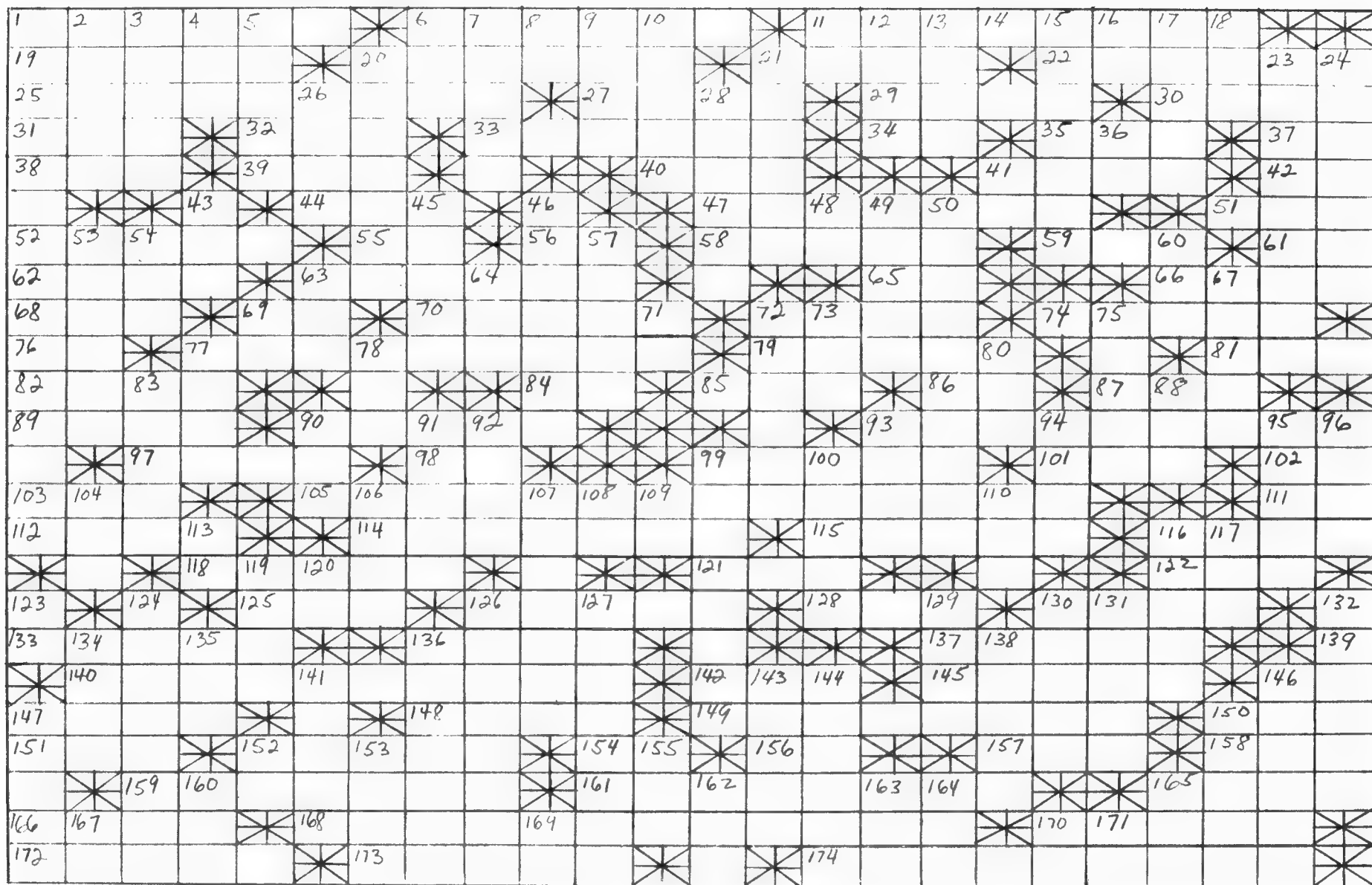
Inasmuch as the shape of the diner communicates on the primary level, as we suggested earlier, it represents a kind of architectural synecdoche. The shape of the diner tells us that it is a "place to eat" (50 sail for 50 ships). "Pepsi" and "Steaks Chops Sea Food" by the same token are linguistic synecdoches when interpreted other than literally. On seeing those two signs (above Scott's Bridge Diner and the Blue Sky Diner, respectively) one, of course, can interpret them literally and envision pepsi, steaks, chops, and sea food. One can also--and perhaps more often than not does--envision something completely different: beef wellington, turnips, and tea, for example. In this last interpretation, in which the part stands for the whole, they constitute linguistic synecdoches. Similarly, when one says that "all diners are alike," he is putting the genus for the species. When one paints ten different diners, he is painting ten different species of the same genus. A remarkable example of putting the part for the whole is a patented trademark of McDonald's--the golden arches. Not only do those arches mean "place to eat," they mean specific items of food and drink: quarter pounder with cheese, filet of fish, french fries, strawberry milk shakes. Mimetic art in general--whether the objects represented be diners, cathedrals, or artichokes--it can be argued, is visual synecdoche. This is true in that it specifically refers to a highly particularized sociological, political, and economic milieu. Not only does it refer to that milieu, it is inseparable therefrom. To what (or to whom) then, do John Baeder's diners refer? They refer to small town, small time, post World War II, on-the-move America. Baeder, happily, has excluded all explicit anthropological references. To do so would perhaps add a grotesque and/or biographical dimension. This is true in that human beings in such a context would have to be reduced to the level of stereotype, such as used to be found in

health books, or would have to be represented as clearly recognizable individuals, such as one might encounter in any family photograph album.

Much, to be sure, remains to be said of the American diner. These remarks are intended as an introduction. At present the American diner is in a state of decrepitude. "In some unused, lagoon, some nameless bay,/ On sluggish, lonesome waters, anchor'd near the shore,/ An old, dismasted, gray and batter'd ship, disabled, done,/ After free voyages to all the seas of earth, haul'd up at last and hawser'd tight,/ Lies rusting, mouldering" (Whitman). For better or for worse, the demise of the diner, if not already a reality, is imminent. If from that, however, a new and valid art has been developed, we cannot be sad, for we have once again re-discovered our eyes. For that we are in John Baeder's debt.



Twenty-four by Twenty-four: A Self Portrait



March 25, 1975
 The Homestead
 S. Robert Powell

ACROSS

1. "grandmother" in Middle English
6. former name for King's County, Ireland
11. Balzacian duchess
19. an open eskimo boat made of a wooden frame, covered with hide and usually propelled with broad paddles. In Greenland it is worked exclusively by women.
20. an image of a Semitic household god
21. a nomadic pastoral people living between the Nile and the Red Sea
22. an expression of approval
25. a meadow, South England, in Surrey on the South bank of the Thames in Egham urban district
27. the ninth letter of the Greek alphabet
29. "help" in French
30. "evils" in French
31. a plural definite article in Italian
32. "garlic" in French
33. variant of a word meaning "to imbue with a soul"
34. "forty" in Rome
35. "Rabbi" as used in a title
37. the negative logarithm of the effective hydrogen ion concentration or hydrogen ion activity in gram equivalents per liter used in expressing both acidity and alkalinity on a scale whose values run from 0 to 14.
38. a female lobster
39. article of apparel
40. in the capacity or character of
41. a shield or breastplate emblematic of majesty that was originally associated chiefly with Zeus but later mainly with Athena.
42. past participle of "avoir"
44. "moved" in French
47. fairy tale cat
51. the part of an anchor from the crown to the fluke
52. a wanderer
55. an indefinite pronoun in French
56. abbreviation for the element whose atomic number is 85

- 58. perfume lady
- 59. the Greek goddess of the dawn; also, Prince Albert's favorite greyhound
- 61. a French reflexive pronoun
- 62. a function word used to introduce a subordinate clause that is anticipated by the expletive it occurring as the subject of the verb
- 63. "in the event" (two words)
- 65. an English indefinite article
- 66. holes in one
- 68. a female cassowary; also, a fussy middle-aged woman
- 69. the second note of Guido's hexacords
- 70. a prefix meaning "beyond"
- 72. an odorous viscous liquid (pl.)
- 74. defeated by a small margin
- 76. used in French before feminine names of large islands such as Sardinia & Iceland
- 77. woman's name
- 79. in accordance with one's wishes
- 81. "nave" in French
- 82. transfer RNA (abbreviation)
- 84. an academic degree
- 85. a government bureau
- 86. abbreviation of an element whose atomic number is 11 and whose atomic weight is 22.9898.
- 87. healthy
- 89. the 16th letter of the Hebrew alphabet
- 90. "fish" in Italian
- 93. decoration by cutting away parts of a surface layer (as of plastic or clay) to expose a different colored ground
- 97. Arcturis is one
- 98. demonstrative pronoun, or adverb, or interjection in French
- 99. "her dowry" in French
- 101. last name of American humorist, 1850-1896
- 102. a kind of modern art

- 103. river in NE Scotland flowing E into North Sea
- 105. 19th in order of succession to the crown of England
- 111. abbreviation of the element whose atomic number is 29 and whose atomic weight is 63.546
- 112. "breast" in French
- 114. the center point of the lower half of an armorial escutcheon
- 115. vex
- 116. African antelopes with heads like oxen, short manes, long tails, and horns in both sexes that curve downward and outward
- 118. a thalloid shoot resembling a leaf
- 121. a colonial hymenopterous insect
- 122. a nephew of Abraham
- 125. increase or lengthen (archaic)
- 126. "merry" in French
- 128. Latin demonstrative adjective
- 130. a Dutch or Afrikaner woman
- 133. purchasable
- 136. a tailless leaping amphibian
- 137. a woodwind having a usual range from B flat below middle C upward for $3\frac{1}{2}$ octaves (pl.)
- 139. English subject pronoun
- 140. scold
- 142. "before"--conjunction
- 145. monks
- 146. initials of Vichy premier, 1940-1944
- 147. a faction
- 148. garden
- 149. a wide-sleeved overgarment with slit sides worn by a deacon or prelate; also, a similar robe worn by the British sovereign at his coronation
- 150. a border
- 151. to move apart with a lever
- 152. a legendary Phrygian king
- 154. a function word meaning "before"
- 156. past participle of "naître"
- 157. an international company
- 158. an American "artist"
- 159. mode of personal behavior

- 161. a large burrowing nocturnal African mammal that has an extensile tongue, powerful claws, large ears, and heavy tail and feeds on ants and termites
- 165. a dandy
- 166. child's plaything
- 168. "and the Trojans" in French
- 170. reside
- 172. ripened ovules of plants
- 173. "herb" in Spanish
- 174. an antidepressant drug $C_{16}H_{18}N_4O_2$
that is an inhibitor of monoamine oxidase

DOWN

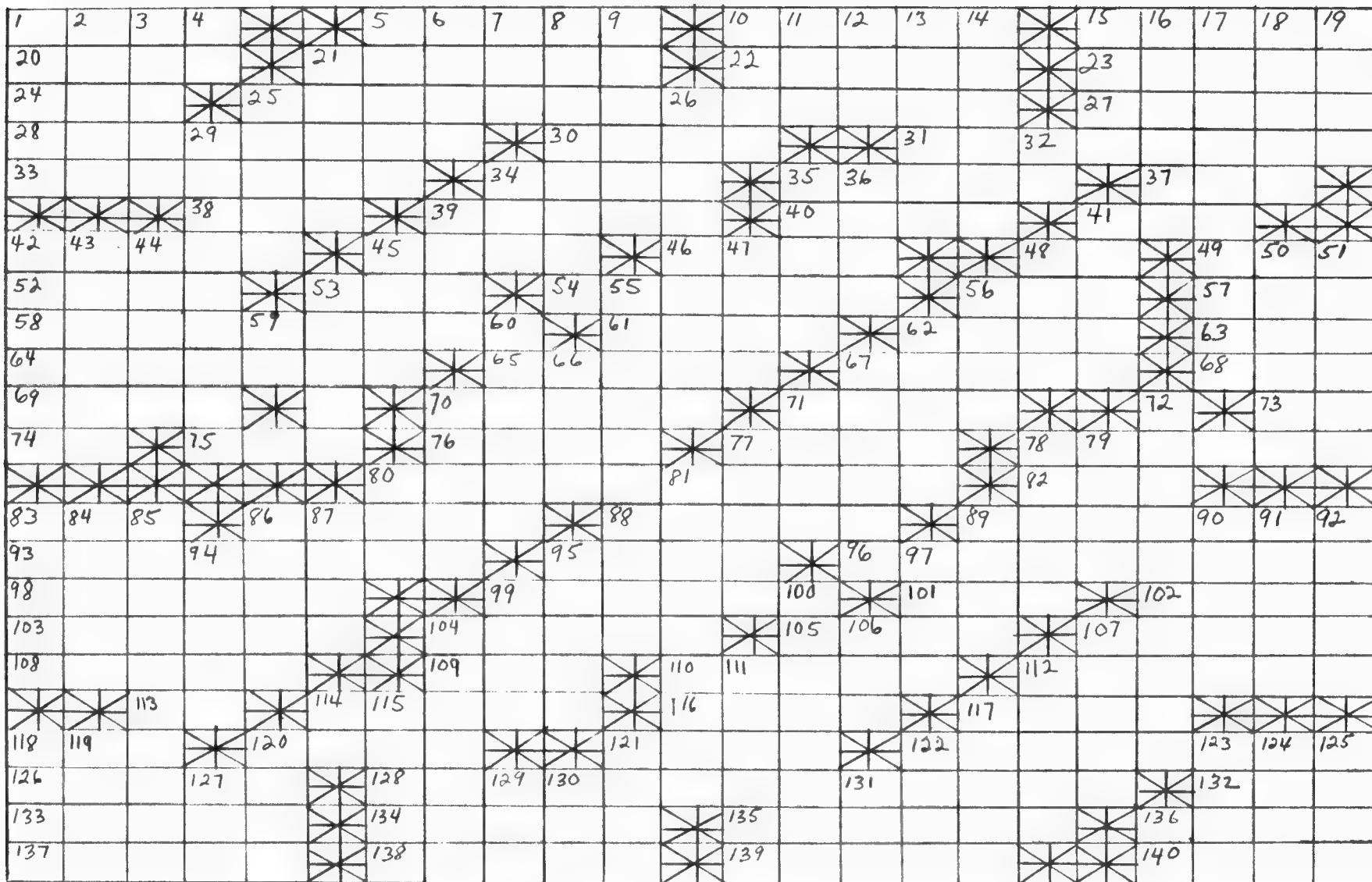
- 1. Edward I died there on July 7, 1307
- 2. "emulator" in French
- 3. the feebly-staining portion of the reticulum of the nucelus of a resting cell in which chromatin granules appear to be embedded
- 4. a son of Jacob and the traditional eponymous ancestor of one of the tribes of Israel
- 5. city and port of W. Burma (pop. 86,451), chief town of Arakan coast
- 6. a dictionary
- 7. a Wagnerian goddess
- 8. the name originally given by Guido to the 4th note in his hexacords
- 9. a sacred bull worshiped by the ancient Egyptians
- 10. title of a painting by Duchamps
- 11. a French definite article
- 12. A Greek hero in the Trojan war who kills himself because the armor of Achilles is awarded to Odysseus.
- 13. 1/16 of a yard (in England)
- 14. a consonant which, for Nabokov, is brown and has a rich rubbery tone

15. an ornate tiered centerpiece consisting typically of a frame of wrought metal bearing dishes, vases, or candle holders
16. abbreviation of an element whose atomic number is 18 and whose atomic weight is 39.948.
17. feet
18. "whether" in Italian
20. a male figure used like a caryatid
21. "brooms" in French
23. displace
24. bring back from obscurity
26. bog
28. "you use" in French (fam. form)
36. third person singular subject pronoun in Ital.
41. third person plural subject pronoun in Ital.
43. to make lace by looping and knotting with a single cotton thread and a small shuttle
45. a hooked anatomical part or process
46. diversion
48. initials of Dutch admiral, 1597-1653
49. a nearly neutral slightly bluish medium gray
50. George III died there on October 25, 1760, and Victoria was born there May 24, 1819.
51. the voyelle which, for Rimbaud, is black
53. W. S. Porter
54. German indefinite pronoun
57. sea birds with narrow wings and forked tails
60. lose firmness
63. English suffix
64. "high" in German
67. "hundred" in Italian (plural)
69. any of one or more substances, first detected in a monkey, present in the red blood cells of most persons and of higher animals; inherited according to Mendelian principles, and capable of inducing intense antigenic reactions
71. one (chiefly Scot.)
72. a person of irritable or violent temper
73. public notices
74. this voyelle is white, for Rimbaud
75. last name of an Irish nationalist and Australian politician, 1816-1903

- 77. tip or tilt up or over
- 78. intense and usually openly displayed anger
- 80. a lace and embroidery joining covered with buttonhole stitches for connecting various parts of the pattern in needle-point lace and cutwork
- 83. a son or daughter of immigrant Japanese parents who is born and educated in America
- 85. Rimbaud said it's red
- 88. city in SW Nigeria NE of Ibadan, pop. 154,589
- 90. "meadow" in French
- 91. a young cod or haddock, esp. one boned and split for cooking
- 92. peaceful
- 93. past participle of the verb derived from ME sawan, akin to OHG sawen, L serere
- 94. man's nickname
- 95. penetrate with or as if with an edged instrument; also, a length of cloth varying from 40 to 100 yards in length
- 96. work
- 99. adjective derived from the Latin "salarium" meaning "salt money"
- 100. "the lie of life in matter" (Christian Science)
- 104. a member of the order Apodes
- 105. the base of the system of natural logarithms having the approximate value 2.71828
- 106. daughter of the Earl of Warwick and wife of Richard III; also, daughter of James II and wife of Prince George of Denmark, died, August 1, 1714.
- 107. prevent
- 108. abbreviation for the element whose atomic number is 87
- 109. an interjection of greeting
- 110. an interjection of amazement
- 113. "Nouveau Francs" abbreviation
- 116. a false and often willfully misleading interpretation of a text
- 117. "maintenant" in English

- 119. "reread" in French
- 120. adverb or adjective used in assenting or agreeing also.
- 123. initials of an American anarchist, 1888-1927
- 124. a means of transportation
- 126. a utility saddle of the hackney type
- 127. an order of mammals having few or no teeth and including the sloths, armadillos, and New World anteaters and formerly also the pangolins and the aardvark
- 129. first name of a tribune of Rome, 1313-1354
- 130. to eject violently
- 131. to exert a reciprocal or counteracting force or influence
- 132. "sur la pointe des pieds"
- 134. an adverb, from OE "aefre"
- 135. attorney (abbreviation)
- 136. molasses in England
- 138. an Indonesian method of hand-printing textiles by coating with wax the parts not to be dyed.
- 141. Leo and several of his friends
- 143. having a coarse manner (chiefly Scot.)
- 144. a number, akin to OHG "einlif"
- 146. the total amount of money bet on a race, game or event
- 147. a tool or device (as for digging, lifting, or cutting) having the characteristics of a spade and a chisel (pl.)
- 150. to give shape to
- 152. abbreviation for the element whose atomic number is 25 and whose atomic weight is 54.9380
- 153. the quantity of irrigation water required to fill the needs of the area of a particular crop
- 155. to propel (nautical)
- 160. of a grayish or dusty color
- 162. a dark mottled or flecked figure appearing, esp. in quartersawed lumber

Twenty-three by Twenty-three: A Self Portrait



April 3, 1975
 249 West 76th Street
 S. Robert Powell

ACROSS

1. a wedge-shaped tool used for cleaving and riving staves, shingles, etc. It has a handle in the plane of the blade, set at right angles to the back.
5. "_____ castus," a tree, species of Vitex, once believed to be a preservative of chastity, also called Abraham's Balm.
10. munificent
15. his posters of Madame Sarah are well known
20. to emit coherent light; also, obs. Sc. form of "lass"
21. display ostentatiously
22. "one read" in French
23. "un aviron" in English
24. an early Northern infinitive (Scot.) of "to be"
25. the Constitution of the United States, as seen by a cynic (2 words)
27. the Flying Dutchman's daughter
28. city S France near the Mediterranean, E of Carcassonne, pop. 38,441.
30. an amount of a biologically active agent (as a drug) required to produce a specific result under strictly controlled conditions.
31. of or belonging to summer
33. the art of bolstering or supporting or grounding (French)
34. a pickle or sauce of small herrings or anchovies.
35. a breakdown (as of a car) or a poor theatrical part--in French
37. a kind of spade used in Ireland (the iron part of the Irish spade is not quite half so broad at the edge as the English garden spade)
38. feminine pronoun, third person, nominative case
39. seemingly
40. the careening of a ship to one side
41. a colloid in a more solid form than a sol
42. shares

- 45. libidinous desire
- 46. faithful
- 48. abbreviation of an element whose atomic number is 83 and whose atomic weight is 208.9806
- 49. hero of an 1896 play by A. Jarry
- 52. a large fluffy scarf of fur, feathers, or delicate fabric (use an indefinite article)
- 53. Russian composer, born in Vilna, 1835-1918
- 54. "low-water mark" in French
- 56. "chemise à _____ Danton"
- 57. in the manufacture of artificial marble, to steep (the composition) in a hardening and preservative preparation
- 58. to discover (two words)
- 61. any of various swift timid long-eared mammals (order Lagomorpha and esp. genus Lepus) having a divided upper lip, long hind legs, a short cocked tail, and the young open-eyed and furred at birth
- 62. to lacerate mentally or emotionally
- 63. alces alces
- 64. "unpublished" in French
- 65. belonging to paradise
- 67. any of a genus of tropical herbs with simple stems, large leaves, and a terminal raceme of irregular flowers
- 68. a son of Jacob and the traditional eponymous ancestor of one of the tribes of Israel
- 69. "storm cloud" in French
- 70. a Roman fountain
- 71. a slow match or smoke (chiefly Scot.)
- 72. this consonant, for Nabokov, looks like oatmeal
- 73. initials of the president of Turkey, 1938-1950)

77. port city on Crete, pop. 40,452
78. "to increase"; "to lengthen" (archaic)
79. a mature female of the genus bos (use an indefinite article)
80. a theatrical word derived probably from the French "qu", the abbreviation of the Latin "quando" meaning "when"
81. ornamental branched candle holder
83. flat brittle cookies
84. mother of Isaac
85. city in the Haute-Vienne, arr. de Limoges, on the Vienne, 3,200 inhabitants.
86. thin and angular
87. the attribute of Orpheus
89. an exuberant, lively, usually small or young person
90. a family of Italian violin makers of Cremona, esp. Nicolò or Nicola, 1596-1684
91. "Mathis der _____" by Hindemith
92. "den" in French
94. third person singular, present indicative, of the French verb meaning "to ring"
95. prose narratives such as the Edda
97. the first fish named in the Mahler song Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt
100. a sudden extreme drop
104. the production by means of electric energy of chemical reactions that when allowed to reverse themselves generate electricity again without serious loss
106. "dregs" in French
107. "beach" in French
111. eliminated
112. "une rame" in English
114. initials of Roman historian, 55 ? -after 117)
115. any of several small ungulate mammals characterized by thickset body with short legs and ears and rudimentary tail, feet with soft pads, and broad nails, and teeth of which the molars resemble those of the rhinoceros and the incisors those of rodents

- 117. hail; also, weep or lament (Scot.)
- 118. a short distance
- 119. an adverb meaning "therefore" or "hence"
from the Old Latin meaning "from the
direction (of)"
- 120. to cloy with overabundance
- 121. a secluded narrow valley
- 122. prefix meaning "eight"
- 123. a nearly extinct goose of the Hawaiian
islands that inhabits waterless uplands
and feeds on berries and vegetation
- 124. an airline organization
- 125. "nonsense" (sometimes considered vulgar)
- 127. past participle of the English verb
meaning "to appear to the perception"
- 129. a kind of whale
- 130. an arrow; also, a woman's nickname
- 131. "garlic" in French
- 136. an interjection of contempt

DOWN

1. an arrow
2. "_____ -joie" (a kill-joy)
3. third person singular, indicative, future, of the French verb "to dare"
4. initials of American writer, 1837-1902
5. a kind of skirt
6. past participle of English verb meaning "to sacrifice"
7. "cloud" in French
8. the hoofed mammals
9. 28 pounds makes two of them
10. rapt
11. prefix meaning up, back or again
12. a warship with a heavy beak at the prow for piercing an enemy ship
13. flashes
14. third person plural, passé simple, of "avoir"
15. nuts, such as beechnuts and acorns, accumulated on the forest floor and often serving as food for animals (as hogs)
16. Elbe en est une
17. intricate
18. district of South Turkey, East of the Gulf of Iskenderun
19. a brackish lake USSR in SW Soviet Central Asia between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, area 26,000
21. "mire" in French
25. belonging to Shem's father
26. the adjective in the Italian title of the Verdi opera in which the Duc de Montfort appears
29. one present but not taking part in a situation or event
32. Italian reflexive pronoun
34. German prefix, used in "foreigner"
35. "beach" in French

36. "winged" in French
39. leave
41. the court gester's daughter in the Verdi opera based on Hugo's Le Roi s'amuse
42. "weathered" in French
43. a sum of money in addition to interest or royalties charged for the granting of a loan or privilege to a company or for the lease or transfer of property (use an indefinite article)
44. a cunning or artful person (French)
45. a bunch of feathers attached to a long chord and used by a falconner to recall a hawk
47. the fruiting spikes of cereals including both the seeds and protective structures
48. West German city on the Rhine, SSE of Cologne, 300,400 inhabitants
50. "brooms" in French
51. undo
53. any of various units of weight of China and Southeast Asia varying around $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds; also, a standard Chinese unit equal to 1.1023 pounds
55. might be a way of describing the daughter of the King of Spain, Portugal or Brazil (3 words)
56. the Ethiopian dollar contains 100 of them
59. third person singular, personal pronoun (Ital.)
60. "son enclère" in English
62. a scolding or dissolute woman (chiefly Scot.)
66. a ruminant mammal, family Cervidae
67. a migratory bird, genus Numenius, related to the woodcock but distinguished by long legs and a long, slender down-curved bill
70. Il a acheté une bague de fiançailles pour son amie mais il ne la lui a pas donnée. (translate the underlined word into English)
71. past participle of the English verb meaning "to bring forth and deposit"
72. a way of describing a point of view which is optimistic but not in excess (2 words)

- 74. abbreviation for the element whose atomic number is 99
- 75. first word of the title of a Hugo drama (1838) the hero of which is a valet who falls in love with a queen, becomes a powerful minister and then sacrifices himself in order not to compromise the queen's honor
- 76. past participle of the French verb meaning "to obey"
- 77. an implement for raising a nap on cloth
- 78. an adherent of a Chinese mystical philosophy traditionally founded by Lao-tzu in the sixth century B.C.
- 80. birds do it in the spring (two words)
- 82. prefix meaning "eight"
- 83. compass point
- 86. past participle of a transitive verb meaning "to fix on an object steadily or with deep concentration"
- 88. a hen turkey (French)
- 89. an ingenious invention of French origin for exhibiting a very complete view of different seas, lakes, rivers, and mountains on the earth's surface. It is formed in the shape of a hollow sphere.
- 93. he who is opposed (two words)
- 95. angry
- 96. a woman who works
- 98. a quality or circumstance that affords protection (chiefly British)
- 99. Palestine
- 101. contend
- 102. one of the four basic taste sensations
- 103. "female peacock" in French
- 104. pseudonym of Françoise Quoirez (1935-)
- 105. man's name
- 107. French preacher of the first crusade (1050 ? -1115)
- 108. an accident in auto racing; also, a surgical passage created between two blood vessels to divert blood from one part to another.

109. "among" in Italian
110. " malsain" or lust
112. French adjective which means "pertaining to the wings of birds"
113. reflexive pronoun in French
114. a boat does it when it veers with or as if with wind
116. "border" in French
117. a small biting two-winged fly (pl.)
118. "six" in Italian
120. river 300 miles long, USSR, in NW Ukraine, flowing N into Pripet river in the Pripet marshes
121. full of brightness
122. adjective for "the process of mountain formation, esp. by the folding of the earth's crust"
126. "diaeresis" in French
128. that family of Malaysian dicotyledonous plants that are parasitic in other plants and have fleshy usually foul smelling apetalous flowers emerging from the host, imbricated seals in place of leaves, and no stems
132. a space in the upper corner of a periodical usually containing advertisement for the periodical itself, or a weather forecast
133. any of various herons that bear long plumes during the breeding season
134. mentally quick and resourceful
135. "to avoid" in French
136. a pier produced by thickening a wall at its termination
137. "a wireless set" in French
138. a heavy, colorless, and relatively inert gaseous element that occurs in air as about one part in 20 million by volume and is used in thyratrons and specialized flash-tubes
139. doigtier de cuir du calfat, de la dentellière
140. a collection of things thrown one on another

Twenty-three by Twenty-three: A Self Portrait

1	F	2	R	3	O	4	E			5	A	6	G	7	N	8	U	9	S			10	L	11	A	12	R	13	G	14	E			15	M	16	V	17	L	18	H	19	A						
20	L	A	S	E				21	F	L	A	U	N	T						22	O	N	A	L	U			23	A	N	O	A	R																
24	A	B	E					25	N	A	I	V	E	Q	O				26	S	S	A	M	E	R			27	S	E	N	T	A																
28	N	A	R	29	B	O	N	N	E					30	U	N	I	T							31	A	E	32	S	T	I	V	A	L															
33	E	T	A	Y	A	G	E						34	A	L	E	C							35	P	36	A	N	N	E			37	L	O	Y													
				38	S	H	E						39	Q	U	A	S	I						40	L	I	S	T				41	G	E	L														
42	P	A	43	R	T	S							44	L	U	S	T						45	L	E	A	L				46	B	I			47	U	50	B	51	U								
52	A	B	O	A				53	C	U	I			54	E	55	T	I	A	G	E				56	C	O	L				57	T	A	N														
58	T	O	U	N	59	E	A	R	T	60	H			61	A	A	R	E					62	R	E	N	D				63	E	C	K															
64	I	N	E	D	I	T	E						65	E	D	E	N	S					66	C	A	N	N	A			67	D	A	N															
69	N	U	E	E									70	T	R	E	V	I					71	L	U	N	T				72	N				73	I	I											
74	E	S			75	R	U	Y					76	O	B	E	I						77	C	A	R	D				78	T	79	A	O	I	S	T											
													80	C	H	I	R	P					81	G	A	I	L	Y				82	O	C	T														
83	S	84	S	85	E					86	G	87	L	U	E	D						88	O	I	N	D	E				89	G	E	O	R	90	A	91	M	92	A								
93	N	A	Y	94	S	A	Y	E	R					95	S	O	R	E					96	W	97	O	R	K	W	O	M	A	N																
98	A	R	M	O	U	R								99	C	A	N	A	A				100	N				101	V	I	E			102	S	A	L	T											
103	P	A	O	N	N	E								104	S	A	G	A	N				105	O	106	L	E	G			107	P	E	T	E	R													
108	S	H	U	N	T									109	T	R	A						110	D	111	E	S	I	R			112	A	L	A	I	R	E											
				113	T	E								114	C	115	H	O	P	S				116	O	R	E	E				117	G	N	A	T													
118	S	119	E	I										120	T	Y	R						121	G	L	A	D				122	O	R	O	G	E	N	123	N	124	I	125	C						
126	T	R	E	127	M	A								128	R	A	129	F	130	F	L	E	S	I	131	A	C	E	A	E			132	E	A	R													
133	E	G	R	E	T									134	A	G	I	L	E					135	E	V	I	T	E	R			136	A	N	T	A												
137	P	O	S	I	E									138	C	N	O	N						139	D	E	L	O	T				140	H	E	A	P												

April 3, 1975
 249 West 76th Street
 S. Robert Powell



"Stay on this road. When you go past Roy's Service Station, in about ten miles, you'll come to a fork in the road. Bear left, and you can't miss it": Some Thoughts Occasioned by a Conversation with John Baeder on May 8, 1975 on the Subject of the American Road in the Era of the Internal Combustion Engine and the Motor Vehicle

S. Robert Powell

This is a book about mutability and rigidity, individuality and conformity, vulnerability and immunity. It is a book about America. Its focus, in general, is the visual heritage of America. Specifically, this is a book about the structural forms and images associated with the American road in the fifty-year period, 1910-1960. It is our contention (1) that those forms and structures are an integral part of a visual legacy that is unlike that of any other nation, (2) that those forms and structures represent beliefs and practices which are not unlike those which we as a nation are rediscovering and reevaluating as we celebrate the bicentenary of the American Revolution.

The history of the American road can be divided into three separate periods according to the dominant power source available and/or utilized in each: (1) from colonial times up to 1830--animals are the most expedient means of transportation; (2) 1830-1893--the period in which the steam powered railroad is regarded as the most useful means of transportation; the public roads in America deteriorate into a wretched condition; (3) 1893-present--the era of the internal combustion engine, hard surfaced roads, and scientific road building, particularly in the period after 1910.

Whatever the power source involved and whatever the nation, it is now generally agreed that the road is one of the fundamental institutions of organized society, and that the relationship between the road and history is highly reflexive. Speaking in the second decade of this century--the beginning of one of the great

road building periods in history--H. Belloc cogently remarked:

Not only is the Road one of the great human institutions because it is fundamental to social existence, but also because its varied effect appears in every department of the State. It is the road which determines the sites of many cities and the growth and nourishment of all. It is the road which controls the development of strategics and fixes the sites of battles. It is the road which is the channel of all trade and, what is more important, of all ideas. In its most humble function it is a necessary guide without which organized society would be impossible; thus, and with the other characters I have mentioned, the Road moves and controls all history. (From the "Introduction," The Road, London, 1924)

It is, in all probability, because of the great importance of the road in any given society--particularly its explicitly utilitarian function--that most people regard the road and the forms and structures associated with it solely as means to an end and not as potential ends in themselves. The road and its concomitant structures, however, are human artifacts and, as such, under appropriate conditions, can function in human experience as aesthetic objects, as autonomous aesthetic phenomena. That the forms and structures of roadside America can validly be considered as intrinsically satisfying images is the raison d'être of the photographs which follow.

What specifically are the forms and structures associated with roadside America and the road in the period 1910-1960? What beliefs, attitudes and practices do those forms represent? The

forms and structures which are the content of this work are all, either directly or indirectly, associated with the motor vehicle (primarily the automobile), which became, it goes without saying, an integral part of life in America in the period 1910-1960.

That content can be divided into three groups:

1. Forms and structures directly associated with the functioning and maintenance of the motor vehicle: gas stations, gas tanks, gas pumps, service stations, paint and body shops, abandoned motor vehicles, automotive junk yards.
2. Forms and structures whose presence along the American road is explained by the fact that the motorist, like his vehicle, must periodically refuel: diners, snack bars, truck stops, ice cream stands, produce stands.
3. Forms and structures whose presence along the American road is explained by the fact that the motorist may choose to spend the night in a public hostelry: motels, cabins, hotels.

These forms and structures, whether directly (group 1) or indirectly (groups 2 and 3) associated with the motor vehicle, have this in common--they are, within their type and subgroup, materially and structurally homogeneous. Most diners, for example, are immediately recognizable as a particular kind of structure. This is explained by the fact that the majority of these roadside structures were conceived and constructed for particular utilitarian

ends. Their design is founded on the principle that "sameness sells." This is true in that the highly particularized architectural configuration of the diner, for example, like that of the church, communicates on the primary level. Their shapes elicit specific and conditioned responses--the shape of the former means "place to eat," the shape of the latter means "place to worship." This does not mean, of course, that these structures and forms are identical. They are not, it must be understood, the mass-produced and nationally franchized structures which now dominate along the American road. The structures and forms which are associated with roadside America in the period 1910-1960, rather, represent a dialectic between the type and the individual, the universal and the particular.

The individual differences within the general type are explained, first of all, by the fact that in most instances the fundamental form of these structures is a matter of individual preference--conditioned, to be sure, by regional availability of raw materials, customs, building codes and practices--and not corporate dictum. Consider, for example, "Mindy's Diner," "Bob's Diner," and "White Manna." All three are immediately recognizable (because of their fundamental shape) as diners, yet all three are as different, we can assume, as the individual owners in question. Similarly, consider the three gas stations which, for our present purposes, we will refer to as "Two Pumps," "Three Pumps," and "Four Pumps." Even though each of these stations dispenses the same commodity--gas--the dispensers are, in these three instances,

different from each other, as are the structures in front of which these pumps (like calling cards) are placed. Or, finally, consider the two photographs which, again for the purposes of this discussion, we shall refer to as "Cabins-Salt Box," and "Cabins-Chalet." These two very different images communicate the same information to the spectator.

The forms and structures of roadside America in the period 1910-1960 are highly particularized not only because they reflect individual ownership and because they participate, both literally and figuratively, in the locality in which they are located, but also because they participate in time. They are, in other words, at the same time actualized and ultimately destroyed by the ineluctable passage of time. They are actualized by the passage of time in that they participate in a creative or productive temporal structure. They are destroyed by the passage of time in that they participate in a destructive temporal structure. That "Diner: 5:35" participates in a productive temporal structure is manifest from the sign which proclaims "Friday--Special Fish Fry." This particular structure appears differently on Friday than it does, say, on Wednesday. It does not appear differently to the spectator on Friday than on Wednesday because it has participated in a destructive temporal structure, as it certainly has done, even though the effect of the passage of those forty-eight hours is not perceptible to the naked eye. It appears differently because it is Friday. The image perceived is different on Friday than on any other day of the week. Similarly, "Blue Moon Bar Restaurant" and "Two Churches and a Diner" par-

participate in a productive temporal structure in that they appear differently during the Christmas season than they do at any other time of year. Likewise, "West Bethel Diner," "Cabins-Salt Box," and "Margie" clearly present an "off-season" appearance, which means that they are structurally different as images at different times of the year. Each of the preceding five images is, in other words, characterized by immediately recognizable individual differences at different moments of a cycle of 365 days, just as "Diner: 5:35" is characterized by immediately recognizable differences at different moments of a cycle of seven days. In neither instance are the individual differences the result of the fact that these forms and structures have participated in a destructive temporal structure. These differences are not the result of aging, as they are, for example, in "Three Pumps." What we are dealing with in "Three Pumps" is a synthetic portrait of three generations of gas pumps. What appears to have happened here is that on two occasions more modern gas pumps have been installed and the old one(s) allowed to remain. The individual differences here are not explained by cyclical and creative temporal structures but rather by a linear and destructive temporal structure. "Three Pumps" appeared a certain way--it was a highly particularized image--in 1930, for example. The structural form of the image presented to perception at that time is no more, yet the gas station appears to continue to fulfill a utilitarian function along the American road. That does not appear to be the case with "Mindy's Diner" nor is it the

case with "Red Truck." Both of these images represent utilitarian objects--a diner and a truck--which have, in effect, been destroyed by a linear temporal structure. Notwithstanding, these relics of the age of the internal combustion engine represent highly particularized forms and structures which are intrinsically interesting, just as their forms and structures were intrinsically interesting when they were actively participating in roadside America. They are destroyed by time, but they are interesting because their deaths were inevitable.

Inasmuch as the forms and structures associated with the American road in the period 1910-1960 actively participate in time and in space they are, therefore, always different. There are, perhaps, hundreds of diners of the general type represented by Mindy's Diner along the American road, yet there is only one "Mindy's Diner." There are hundreds, perhaps thousands, of gas pumps like those in "Two Pumps," yet there is only one "Two Pumps." The nationally franchized eateries, motels and service stations which currently predominate along the American road continually present receipt-like structural forms and images which are always identical; they are unaffected by time, they are unaffected by place. They are immortal, but they are dull.

Because of the fact that the forms and structures associated with roadside America in the period 1910-1960 are firmly situated in time and in space they are, in addition, chroniclers of change. Their story, as we suggested when speaking of "Three Pumps," is a continuous and detailed account of change. They record, without

analysis or interpretation the history of the American road. "Jennie's Cozy Spot Lunch," "West Bethel Diner," "Shoes: NW17Ave/ NW31St," "Rickey's" and "Little Joe's Chicken Skillet" are historical documents. They are sociological, economic, political and cultural records of a particular period of American history. They, as well as all of the images assembled in this book, are an important part of the visual legacy of America.

The second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence holds certain truths to be self-evident. At the time when the Declaration of Independence was made those truths were not considered self-evident by most of the so-called civilized world. The belief that those truths are self-evident is, above all, the distinguishing characteristic of life in America. Those truths are not only reiterated in the founding documents of our national being--the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution--but permeate, at the same time, the fine and applied arts of America and the social, economic and political institutions under which we live. Those truths are not arrived at by rhetorical means or rational processes, but rather by a kind of direct seeing or perception. Ultimately, then, it is a question of learning how to see. Certain truths, we believe, are to be found along the American road.

"You road I enter upon and look around, I believe you
are not all that is here,
I believe that much unseen is also here. . .
You air that serves me with breath to speak!
You objects that call from diffusion my meanings and
give them shape!
You light that wraps me and all things in delicate equable
showers!
You paths worn in the irregular hollows by the roadsides!

I believe you are latent with unseen existences, . . .
From all that has touch'd you I believe you have imparted
to yourselves, and now would impart the same secretly to me.
From the living and the dead you have peopled your im-
passive surfaces, and the spirits thereof would be evident
and amicable with me. . . "

Song Of The Open Road, Walt Whitman

It is now generally agreed that the road is one of the primary institutions of organized society and that the relationship between the road and history is highly reflexive. Speaking in the second decade of this century--the beginning of one of the great road building periods of all time--H. Belloc cogently remarked:

Not only is the road one of the great human institutions because it is fundamental to social existence, but also because its varied effect appears in every department of the State. It is the road which determines the sites of many cities and the growth and nourishment of all. It is the road which controls the development of strategics and fixes the sites of battles. It is the road which is the channel of all trade and, what is more important, of all ideas. In its most humble function it is a necessary guide without which organized society would be impossible; thus, and with the other characters I have mentioned, the road moves and controls all history. (From the "Introduction," The Road, 1924)

It is our contention that the American road--perhaps the greatest road the human race has ever built--as well as the forms and structures off the American road, are unique. Consider, for example, the following facts:

1) Most of the roads in America were built before the cities and towns which are now connected by them existed. Before there were specific places to go in America, in other words, there were roads to take you there. European roads were built, for the most part, to connect extant population centers. The

roads in America were built in order to fulfill what we believed to be our Manifest Destiny "to overspread and possess the whole continent which had been allotted to us by Providence."

2) The American road is an extraordinarily intricate system which not only permeates the entire nation but also provides multiple and essentially equal alternative routes between most places. In going from Denver to Chicago or from Philadelphia to Washington, for example, there is not just one road, there are many. To fully appreciate the alternatives built into the American road one need only consider the lack of choice involved in driving, say, from Bordeaux to Paris, or from Salzburg to Geneva. In each of these instances there is basically only one road.

3) The American roadside is a vast and comprehensive marketplace--diners, restaurants, truck stops, fast food chains, cabins, service stations, motels, snack bars--which is more pervasive and, undoubtedly, more lucrative than any other similar market in the world.

4) The American road and the automobile are an integral part of the life experience of the majority of Americans. Learning how to drive, getting a driver's licence, and buying a car of one's own are, for many, important events in the growing up process. The automobile in a suburban life-situation is virtually a necessity.

Notwithstanding these facts, the American road and the forms and structures directly and indirectly associated with it are unseen by the majority of Americans. It is, in all probability, because of the great importance of the road in our individual and national consciousness--particularly its explicitly utilitarian function--that most people regard the road and roadside America solely as means to an end and not as potential ends in themselves. The American landscape is lost to their perception; it is everywhere but they are conditioned not to see it. That is not, however, universally the case. Slowly we are re-discovering and celebrating the American landscape as an end in itself. We are once again willing to acknowledge that the familiar, the prosaic and the commonplace are worthy of our attention. Witness, for example, the following books:

1. David Plowden. Hand of Man on America, 1971
2. Eric Arthur and Dudley Witney. Barn: A Vanishing Landmark in North America, 1972
3. Margot Gayle and Edmund Gillon, Jr. Cast Iron Architecture in New York City, 1974
4. David Plowden. Commonplace, 1974
5. David Plowden. Bridges: The Spans of North America, 1974
6. Robert Sommer. Street Art, 1975

What we propose to demonstrate in this book is that the American road and the forms and structures which are directly and indirectly associated with it are important sociological, economic, cultural and historical documents which represent an important component of the visual legacy of America. We will, at the same time, demonstrate that those forms and structures (gas stations, diners, motels, cabins, paint and body shops, ice cream stands, truck stops, gas pumps, etc.) represent human artifacts which, under appropriate conditions, can function in human experience as aesthetic objects--as autonomous aesthetic phenomena.

Some of the questions which we will ask ourselves (the answers to which will be reflected in this book) are as follows:

1) What specifically are the forms and structures directly and indirectly associated with the American road?

2) To what degree are those forms and buildings structurally homogeneous? To what extent do they reveal and/or allow for individual differences?

3) What beliefs, attitudes and practices do those forms represent?

4) Is roadside America noticeably different in different regions of America?

5) Are there seasonal variations in roadside America? Is it significantly affected by the passage of time?

6) How is roadside America different from generation to generation?

In answering those questions--and many others--we will not only learn how, but also why, the American road and the forms and structures associated with it are unique. We will, at the same time, learn about ourselves and about America.

S.R.P.



Swan Lake, American Ballet Theatre, Monday Evening, July 14, 1975
(M-109)

. . . and Benno has spotted a flight of swans and Siegfried orders pursuit and when Siegfried first sees Odette she is in flight. She is a swan by day and Odette by night. Swan Lake is filled with the tears shed by the mother of Odette and Swan Lake enters my arterial system, my veinal system, my "nerve system" (as Kostya would say), and the year begins and the year ends. And in a few minutes the world created by Tchaikovsky will obliterate the rest of the world and that scene in Ken Russell's The Music Lovers in which the last few moments of "Swan Lake" are danced in a natural setting and Glenda Jackson has to have the plot explained to her and von Rothbart is there and Tchaikovsky's lover are there and the un-natural eclipses the natural, all that is now before me. This performance is sold out and that is the sound of the house microphone being turned on and the house manager is about to make an announcement and everyone is nervous, and we are all wondering who has cancelled and it was not a principal dancer and now the peasants are dancing. The peasants are the background against which this ballet is set. The peasants are the background against which the modern world is set. Siegfried is in green and yellow and brown boots and there's the Maypole and even play must be structured. They structure their play-world by means of a pole. They structure their play-world by means of a month. They structure their play-world by means of a day. And one of the directors of the American Ballet Theatre, Lucia Chase, is playing the role of The Princess-Mother and her role is very narrative-oriented. She does pantomime to advance the plot and The Princess-Mother helps to establish the background against which this ballet is set. Siegfried now has his bow and arrows and the peasants have already become scenery and the Pas de Trois is there. The arrow that Siegfried aims at Odette enters his own heart and now the forward narration of the ballet is stopped and the royalty are being entertained. Art within the context of art, a play within a play, a dance within a dance. The dog just barked and many of the people in the house gave forth a twitter. The dancers are all dancing for Siegfried and The Princess-Mother and we are the

spectators of the spectators and the performers and for whom are the dancers bowing. Again the majority of the house gives forth a nervous twitter when the old man gets drunk and he becomes gauche and quite human and the majority of the house is glad that he is human. The peasants imitate the royal entertainments and here life is copying art. Heraldic music and the aristocrats take their leave and just after they do the Swan theme is heard and where will the arrow land and in Act II the peasants are no more and we are in the metaphorical realm and Act I is a preparation for metaphor. The rest of the ballet emerges from the allegorical first act. The albatros is airborne and she will remain so until daybreak. Odette will not allow Siegfried to kill von Rothbart because he is the art-maker. He is the transition. Eighteen swans and eight more. Siegfried will not allow his men to kill the swans for they are the creation of the art-maker. Act II of Swan Lake has some of my favorite ensemble dancing of all time. The White Swan Adagio. Brava Makarova, Bravo Nagy. The Dance of the Cygnets and I inevitably think of that performance of Swan Lake in Lisner Auditorium in Washington, D. C. when I saw the four cygnets in the wings before their dance and I saw the four cygnets dance and I saw the four cygnets in the wings after the Dance of the Cygnets and reality becomes illusion and illusion becomes reality and where are we and it is form that is valuable. Makarova's back is incredible and according to one of the ballet-types to my left "the intermissions are shorter this year than they were last year." Siegfried will now be deceived by the Baron von Rothbart and his daughter Odile, disguised as Odette. The art-maker pursues his own end. A royal entertainment and the Prince and The Princess-Mother will be royally entertained and the forward motion of the ballet is momentarily halted. And we are with the Prince and The Princess-Mother. We are spectators. We are participants. The spectator is a participant and a dialectical relationship takes place. Odile and trombones and thirty-two fouettés--whirling icicles sweating magic and the world disappears. Odile and trombones and thirty-two fouettés--whirling icicles sweating magic and the world appears. Makarova

is an entirely different swan from Cynthia Gregory. The latter is more aristocratic and aloof and more to my taste. Makarova's soul is not visible. Odette has been betrayed and life is no longer bearable and she will free herself by death. " Weisst du auch, mein Freund, wohin ich dich führe? Im Feuer leuchtend liegt dort dein Herr, Siegfried, mein seliger Held. Dem Freunde zu folgen wieherst du freudig? Lockt dich zu ihm die lachende Lohe? Fühl' meine Brust auch, wie sie entbrennt; helles Feuer das Herz mir erfasst, ihn zu umschlingen, umschlossen von ihm, in mächtigster Minne vermählt ihm zu sein! Heiaho! Grane! Grüss' deinen Herren!" And Emma goes to Bournisien and Virginia Woolf walks to the river Ouse and harmony prevails. Eighteen swans are the only inhabitants of the world. Five or six bouquets are there and they are for Odette. Two bouquets are carried on, one is red and one is white and they are both for her and the Prince is presented with a white wreath and an armful of loose flowers was just thrown and the Prince is Odette's flower attendant. The Prince kisses the hand of Odette and the house goes wild. Solo bow for the Prince and two bouquets are thrown from the house and a solo bow for Odette and three bouquets are thrown from the house. They both bow and two more bouquets are thrown and they both bow again and one more bouquet is thrown and Flosshilda holds up the recovered ring joyously and the Rhine returns to its bed and the waters are calm and the heroes and the gods are seen sitting in the Hall of Valhalla. Bright flames seize on the abode of the gods. Baron von Rothbart is no more. Benno has spotted a flight of swans and Siegfried orders pursuit and when Siegfried first sees Odette she is in flight. . .

Hamlet, New York Shakespeare Festival, July 18, 1975.

(Section O, Row H, seat 7), Delacorte Theatre, Central Park.

The king will enter and the king will exit and this is the way it was and will be and the play will make the frame and the frame is there and le monde du prince va s'imposer on the present world and nous attendons l'arrivée du prince et ceci n'est pas un ballet. Who are those soldiers? They are the prelude and the prelude is the trait d'union entre le monde que nous habitons et celui qui sera créé par les acteurs et le silence nous entourne et nous attendons. The world première of Mahler's Symphony No. 8 was in Munich and the whole audience rose and applauded the conductor who would re-create the world. "Who's there?" "Long live the king!" and why do they look like Nazis and "This bodes some strange eruption to our state" (Horatio) and why has this play been up-dated and how is it possible that they can articulate so many words so rapidly and so beautifully and "We pray you (Hamlet), throw to earth this unprevailing woe." And Hamlet is entreated not to return to Wittenburg and his studies. "Ah, that this too too solid flesh would. . . Frailty thy name is woman" (Hamlet) and those lines came off very well. Hamlet was probably first performed outside and so I am seeing it now. The ghost of King Hamlet--the supernatural enters the realm of the natural. "All is not well" (Hamlet). There is Ophelia and the last time I saw Ophelia she was in Donald's garden in London and Twiggy had come for a visit. "I am native here and to the manor born." The ghost of King Hamlet implores his son to "Revenge this murder most foul." The magic potion enters the ear here; the magic potion enters the eyelids in A Midsummer Night's Dream. The orifices of the body are vulnerable and the audience has presently decided to snicker and twitter because "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark." Most people insist on judging art by the standards of life and Hamlet informs Horatio that "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy Horatio." Polonius is a wonderful character. He is a grammarian and he hears himself talking and

he comments on what he has here to say and the character talks back to the author and art examines itself. Polonius: "What do you read my lord?" Hamlet: "Words words." Polonius and Hamlet are pre-occupied with words. Hamlet and Polonius are pre-occupied with words. Polonius: "I now humbly take my leave of you my lord." Hamlet: "There is nothing with which I would more willingly part." Hamlet: "I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space." Hamlet is free. Hamlet is free even though he inhabits "the most vile of prisons." Words are freedom. Hamlet: "He that plays the king shall be welcome." And now the players are there and the play-within-the-play is about to begin. Hamlet and Polonius believe in the same fictions. Hamlet is deliberately delivering lines on the inner-stage and twelve to sixteen lines will be inserted into the inner-play by the outer-character Hamlet and Hamlet will avenge the murder of King Hamlet. Claudius and Gertrude will fall into an aesthetic trap laid by Hamlet. Claudius and Gertrude will do so because they will under-distance the inner play and that will happen tomorrow. Art will be used to serve the purposes of life. Hamlet advises the inner-characters not to exaggerate but "Hold up a mirror to nature." The inner play becomes art and the outer play becomes reality and where does that leave the fifteen hundred spectators here assembled. Art solves life. Art shapes life. Art solves life. Art shapes life. Art solves life. Art shapes life. Denmark will be put back in order by means of art. The murder of King Hamlet has produced chaos in the state of Denmark. The only way to learn about life is to study art. Hamlet: "I am not a pipe to be played on." Hamlet: "I will speak daggers to her but use none." Hamlet creates his own characters by means of art. Claudius-the-murderer is the creation of Hamlet. Hamlet looks on his creation and we look on Hamlet. Shakespeare looks on his creation and we look on Hamlet. Hamlet's mother cannot see the supernatural (the ghost) nor can she tolerate art and that is why Claudius and Gertrude want to send Hamlet to England. Hamlet: "I am mad in craft." Ophelia is playing with dolls and Laertes is her brother and they are the children of Polonius. Hamlet

admires the skull of Yorick, the court jester who has been dead for twenty-three years. Hamlet the word-jester admires Yorick the court jester. Bluebirds always recognize bluebirds. Hamlet and Laertes are dueling--formalized anger and hate. Hamlet: "I am dead Horatio." Horatio: "Good night sweet Prince, flights of angels sing thee to thy rest." Unity has been created out of chaos: and the strange eruption in the state of Denmark is no more. Art: and the strange eruption in the state of Denmark is no more.

The Comedy of Errors, New York Shakespeare Festival, July 29, 1975
(Section D, Row H, Seat 2: Delacorte Theatre, Central Park)

The set is rotating and the stage is rotating and commedia dell'arte characters are everywhere and Ephesus and Syracuse are rivals and each has its own territory and this convention is used in Romeo and Juliette. Egeon introduces the fable and reality will be the backdrop. Chaos is here superimposed on order and Egeon has been apprehended and has escaped the citizens of Ephesus by pretending he was a statue. Art, for most people, is non-existent. The character in the clock tower is watching what is going on on stage with a camera and a pair of binoculars. Multiple perspective. June Gable is playing the part of Adriana, wife to Antipholus of Ephesus and she is wonderful. Her interpretation is very Spanish and very Martha Raye and very successful. She keeps talking about her fading beauty and now she has a giant meat cleaver and she offers the following: "I live unstained!" She performs for the other characters in the play who now applaud her and throw flowers and yell brava and her performance is simultaneously applauded by the audience. Shakespeare's theatre is about theatre. As she performs, Adriana asks the prostitutes (spelled "propstitutes" in the program) for approval and they grant it and applaud. Shakespeare is a master at dealing with his audience's needs but never gratuitously caters to those needs. I wonder how much of this farting and crotch grabbing and defecation is in the actual text. John Pasquin is, I get the impression, freely re-writing Shakespeare. Three farting scenes in one play is over-doing it. "Go, get you from the door." And now a peasant female is throwing eggplants and other fruit at one of the characters and it is very funny. The music is like that in $8\frac{1}{2}$ and a circus feeling is often here created. Nuns in procession suddenly appear and disappear. "Do you know me sir, am I Dromio?" What is real? What is sur-real? What is ir-real? Two sets of twins are mixed up and the confusion is rampant. Dromio remarks that "the whole world is to be found on Nell's body. The sign in the cafe says "Andato a Pranzo"; a chain a rope a chain a rope. Egeon is now wearing a gorilla suit.

crimes committed, but, rather, because of what Ulysses (speaking to Hector) refers to as "fautes":

"Ce n'est pas par des crimes qu'un peuple se met en situation fausse avec son destin, mais par des fautes. Son armée est forte, sa caisse abondante, ses poètes en plein fonctionnement. Mais un jour, on ne sait pourquoi, du fait que ses citoyens coupent méchamment les arbres, que son prince enlève vilainement une femme, que ses enfants adoptent une mauvaise turbulence, il est perdu. Les nations, comme les hommes, meurent d'imperceptibles impolitesses. C'est à leur façon d'éternuer ou d'éculer leurs talons que se reconnaissent les peuples condamnés. . . Vous avez sans doute mal enlevé Hélène. . ."

Jean Giraudoux, La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu
(Act II, xiii)



Parade

Harmonies

It is with pleasure that The Sheffield Press,
New York City, New York, announces the publication,
on August 15, 1975, of Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical
Self-Portrait by S. Robert Powell, in a limited edition
of five copies, one copy of which we have been author-
ized to present to you.

Your presence at a gala reception-dinner, during
the course of which you will be presented by the author
with copy number two of Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical
Self-Portrait, to be held in the author's rooms at 249
West 76th Street in the City of New York, on August 15,
1975, is, therefore, requested. Reception at six-thirty.
Dinner at eight.

Donald W. Powell
51 Bateman Avenue
Cranesville, Pennsylvania. 16410.

-- copy of Parade
Harmonies in
library at
Russell
Homestead

LE CONSERVATOIRE

15 août 1975, dix-neuf heures

Le Programme des Cérémonies de Distribution du Livre

PARADE HARMONIES: A DIALECTICAL SELF-PORTRAIT
de

S. Robert Powell

- I. OUVERTURE
Lecture: Spleen (LXXVI) de Charles Baudelaire..... S. Powell
- II. DEVOILEMENT DU LIVRE..... S. Powell
- III. DISTRIBUTION DU LIVRE..... S. Powell
Exemplaire numéro 1..... S. Robert Powell
Exemplaire numéro 2..... Donald Walter Powell
Exemplaire numéro 3..... Kate Denison Rodko
Konstantin Alexandrovich Rodko
Exemplaire numéro 4..... Gail Trebbe
Exemplaire numéro 5..... Genie Wing
- IV. ATTESTATION DU LIVRE..... S. Powell
D. Powell
K. D. Rodko
K. A. Rodko
G. Trebbe
G. Wing
- V. LECTURE DE LA PREFACE DU LIVRE..... S. Powell
- VI. LECTURE DE L'INTRODUCTION DU LIVRE..... S. Powell

VII. EXAMINATION ET APPRECIATION DU LIVRE..... S. Powell
D. Powell
K. D. Rodko
K. A. Rodko
G. Trebbe
G. Wing

VIII. DISTRIBUTION DES REMBRANDT:

"The Polish Rider"..... S. Powell
"Rembrandt's Mother (?)"..... D. Powell
"A Young Woman in Fancy Dress"..... K. D. Rodko
"Self-Portrait"..... K. A. Rodko
"Portrait of Jan Six"..... G. Trebbe
"An Old Man Seated in an Armchair"..... G. Wing

IX. POSTLUDE: Une fête musicale créée par S. Robert Powell:

Triangularité: Chanson synchronique et symboliste pour
la flûte en bois brésilienne, chœur et ténor, basée sur
un discours de Nina, tiré de La Mouette de Tchekhov*

Chœur..... D. Powell
K. D. Rodko
K. A. Rodko
G. Trebbe
G. Wing

Ténor..... S. Powell

Flûtiste..... S. Powell

* Première Mondiale

Le texte de Triangularité:

"Mankind and the animals, lions, eagles and partridges, horned deer, geese, spiders, silent fish inhabiting the sea, starfish and those creatures invisible to the naked eye--in short, in a word, all living things, all living things, all living things, having run their sad course, are extinct. Eons have passed since a living soul has stirred on the earth's surface. And this poor moon shines its light in vain. In the meadows the cranes no longer waken with a cry and the May beetles' murmur is silent in the limes. It is cold, cold, cold! Empty, empty, empty! Terrible, terrible, terrible! (Pause) The bodies of the living creatures have crumbled to dust and as eternal matter metamorphosed into rocks, into water, into clouds, their souls are now as one. That peaceful universal soul is me. I. . . I am the soul of Alexander the Great, Caesar, Shakespeare, Napoleon, and of the lowest of the low. In me the consciousness of man and the animal instinct mingle, and I remember everything, everything, everything, and every life I live anew in me."

Nina Mikhailovna Zarechnaya (Acte I)

La Mouette, Anton Tchekhov

Triangularité

- I. Introduction: la flûte: Improvisations: Andante
Crescendo..... S. Powell
- II. Le Discours de Nina: Andante Parlando Fugato: A Cappella:
- a. le discours (complet)..... chœur et ténor
 - b. le discours (du commencement à la pause)..... ténor
 - c. le discours (complet)..... chœur
 - d. le discours (complet)..... ténor
 - e. le discours (de la pause à la fin)..... chœur
- III. Coda: la flûte: Improvisations: largo espressivo.. S. Powell

Introduction

The chronological history of the world is, unlike the synchronistic, at the same time, identical for all men and well-known. (Different degrees of exposure and comprehension, to be sure, do exist.) Having made a systematic and concerted effort, particularly in the decade 1964-1974, to understand: (1) the primary chronological and internal developmental patterns which the principal works of music, literature and art of the Western world represent when seen collectively and in reference to the linear structure of empirical reality and (2) the form and content of the components of those aesthetic patterns, I am now beginning to perceive unity and order there where once I perceived only multiplicity and chaos. In order to increase my understanding of that unity and that order--from which I am inseparable and in terms of which I define myself--I have chosen to consider herein the principal aesthetic phenomena created in the West, primarily in the past 2,000 years, not as chronologically arranged components of internal developmental patterns; but, rather, as components of an external synchronistic structure in which co-existence and co-incidence are more important than linear sequences or historical antecedents. Such a structure necessarily results in a different history of the world every time that that history is re-written. This is true in that the content of that structure at each re-writing, like the structure itself, represents a portrait of

both the artist and the world in the period during which the world is re-created.

The history of Western music, literature and art is herein divided into three hundred and sixty-six autonomous tableaux, each of which corresponds to a single day in the calendar year beginning September 1, 1975 and concluding August 31, 1976. On each tableau are juxtaposed (1) those aesthetic phenomena which were presented to the world (or a part thereof) on a given day, and (2) those events which took place (or take place) on that same day. On the Feast Day of Eric, King of Sweden, for example, the following aesthetic phenomena were presented to the world: (1) the "ballet réaliste" Parade (music by Eric Satie; scenario by Jean Cocteau; settings, costumes and curtain by Pablo Picasso; choreography by Leonide Massine; conducted by Ernest Ansermet; performed by Serge Diaghilev's Ballet Russe in the Théâtre du Chatelet, Paris); (2) the one-act ballet Prince Igor (music of Alexander Borodin; scenery and costumes by Nicholas Roehrich; choreography by Fokine; performed by Serge Diaghilev's Ballet Russe in the Théâtre du Chatelet, Paris); (3) the opera Iphigénie en Tauride (music by Christoph Willibald Gluck, text by François Guillard after Euripides's play). On that same day, May 18th, Henri Vieuxtemps' Fantasia pour le violon sur la quatrième corde was first performed in America. Princess Victoria met the Coburg Prince, Albert, and went to the opera with him to hear I Puritani on May 18th. Gustav Mahler, George Meredith and Isaac Albeniz all died on May 18th. Karl Goldmark, Dame Margot

Fonteyn, Ezio Pinza and Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua were all born on May 18th.

The structure of Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical Self-Portrait, considered as a finished or complete work in which the "content" is found only on the right-hand pages, is analogous to that utilized by T. S. Eliot and James Joyce in their principal creations. The former, for example, restructured the history of the world in a synchronistic manner and created a portrait of the artist and of the world entitled The Waste Land; the latter restructured the history of the world in a synchronistic manner and created a portrait of the artist and of the world (such as it was on June 16, 1904) entitled Ulysses. Herein the history of the world has been similarly restructured. The result is a synchronistic history of Western music, literature and art, a portrait of the artist, a portrait of the world, created by S. Robert Powell in the period January 15, 1975-July 15, 1975. In restructuring the world as I have herein done, I am not, it must be understood, attempting to establish explicit internal correspondences between the phenomena juxtaposed on each of the right-hand pages. The phenomena listed on each of the right-hand pages are related only because of co-incidence. Their juxtaposition is the inevitable result of the exigencies of the arbitrary external structure of which they are all a part. Similarly, I am not attempting to establish or delineate particular astrological correspondences or explanations for the phenomena listed on each of the three hundred and sixty-six autonomous

tableaux, even though such may well exist. My intentions in Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical Self-Portrait are purely aesthetic.

The aesthetic, historical and sociological phenomena juxtaposed on each of the right-hand pages are, given the structure of which they are a part, to be spatially inter-related by the reader, who must abandon his position as spectator and participate in the art object. Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical Self-Portrait, like all works of art whatever their form or content, is an instrument that can be used in the acquisition of self-knowledge. The synchronistic history of the world is different every day. The reader is different every day. My objective in this work is to establish a structure which will allow the reader to interact, on a systematic basis and over an extended period of time, with the synchronistic history of the world such as I have re-created it.

The structure of Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical Self-Portrait, considered as an un-finished or in-complete work in which the reverse of each of the three hundred and sixty-six tableaux is blank, is unlike that created by any other writer. The present work is not only an instrument that can be used in the acquisition of self-knowledge, but also a structure wherein knowledge of the self can be recorded. As this work is read, a dialectic will be established between the reader and each of the three hundred and sixty-six autonomous tableaux.

Whatever results from that interaction can be recorded on the reverse of each tableau. On August 31, 1976 the dialectic between the reader and the book which began on September 1, 1975 will come to an end. The result of that interaction between the reader and the present work is, in effect, a portrait of the artist (reader), a portrait of the world, such as it was in the period September 1, 1975-August 31, 1976. (In order to maintain a continuous portrait of the artist and of the world after August 31, 1976, the information recorded on the reverse of each tableau, plus any additional information recorded by the reader, would have to be incorporated into the front of the appropriate tableau where, of course, deletions could be made, and the cycle repeated--the reverse of each tableau always being blank at the beginning of a new cycle.)

A dialectic analogous to that established between the reader and the three hundred and sixty-six tableaux will similarly be established between the reader and the two remaining divisions of Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical Self-Portrait:

- (1) The autonomous works of art created by the author and by Donald W. Powell, Kate Denison Rodko, Konstantin Alexandrovich Rodko, Gail Trebbe and Genie Wing which have been included herein. Some of these works have previously been presented to the world. Others are herein being given their world premières.

"Grâce à l'art, au lieu de voir un seul monde, le nôtre, nous le voyons se multiplier, et autant qu'il y a d'artistes originaux, autant nous avons de mondes à notre disposition, plus différents les uns des autres que ceux qui roulent dans l'infini et, bien des siècles après qu'est éteint le foyer dont il émanait, qu'il s'appelât Rembrandt ou Vermeer, nous envoient encore leur rayon spécial."
(Marcel Proust, Le Temps Retrouvé)

- (2) The autonomous works of art created by other artists and the other useful reference material included herein.

The components of these last two divisions of Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical Self-Portrait represent and integral part of the portrait of the world such as it was perceived/conceived by the author in the period January 15, 1975-July 15, 1975. Whatever results from the interaction between the components of these two divisions of the present work and the reader is, it goes without saying, an important part of the portrait of the world and of the reader which will result on August 31, 1976, and should be recorded in either (or both) of the following places: (1) on the reverse of the tableau page of the day (or days) when such interaction(s) should occur; (2) on those pages which are specifically intended as recording structures, e.g., the page which lists "Important Public Collections of American Silver."

Those pages which contain autonomous works of art created either by the author or by Donald W. Powell, Kate Denison Rodko, Konstantin Alexandrovich Rodko, Gail Trebbe or Genie Wing, or those which contain autonomous works of art created by other artists are, of course, ends in themselves and should not, for that reason, be literally used as instruments for recording information.

On September 1, 1975, therefore, each of the owners of Parade Harmonies: A Dialectical Self-Portrait will begin, each in his own manner, to rewrite the history of the world. The task, like the six individuals involved, is promethean.

S. Robert Powell
July 15, 1975
249 West 76th Street
New York City

